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# ISLAM AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

A STUDY OF THE INTERPRETATION OF  
THEOLOGICAL IDEAS IN THE TWO RELIGIONS

*In Three Parts*

- I ORIGINS (*two volumes*)
- II SCHOLASTIC DEVELOPMENT
- III CRITICAL RECONSTRUCTION

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**PART ONE**

**VOLUME II**

THE THEOLOGICAL POSITION AT THE CLOSE OF  
THE PERIOD OF CHRISTIAN ASCENDANCY IN  
THE NEAR EAST



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THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN COMPLETE  
CONFORMITY WITH THE AUTHORISED  
ECONOMY STANDARDS

DEDICATED  
IN AFFECTION AND ESTEEM  
TO  
CHARLES PHILLIPS CAPE  
WHO INSPIRED MY FIRST  
VENTURES IN THIS TASK



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## PART I

### SECTION THREE

#### THE THEOLOGICAL POSITION AT THE CLOSE OF THE PERIOD OF CHRISTIAN ASCENDANCY IN THE NEAR EAST

##### INTRODUCTION

Wensinck says that three centuries were to elapse after the death of Muhammad "before the juristic and theological system of Islam could be completely worked out".<sup>1</sup> In saying this he states the absolute minimum, and these three centuries cover the period with the theological development of which we are concerned here. It is the period when the Christian influence was most potently exercised in theology and it is the formative period of Muslim theology. Before making the survey of the theological position at the end of the period, we have to take into consideration all that we have found hitherto in these pages and briefly to indicate the important movements in Islam during the period. These movements and the ideas arising from them present us with something which can be called theology emerging from the Muslim side. It is of great importance to examine these if we wish to bring Islamic theology into some intelligible relation of correspondence with or contradiction to the already existing Christian theology.

No one will make the mistake of thinking that there was nothing distinctive at all in Islam and the statement that all the sects of Islam rose through contact with Christianity is altogether too sweeping. We have only to glance at the materials which were available to the early Muslim thinkers to recognize that there was ample distinctive data which could be made available for the formulation of theology. There is the Qur'an and the gradually accumulated traditional material which filled out and rendered concrete what was vague or embryonic in the Qur'an. Thus, for instance, we find reflected in the traditions the questions raised about the miracles of Muhammad. The cryptic words of the Qur'an with reference to the "splitting of the moon" are amplified, explained and rendered circumstantial. Similarly the Qur'an had left vague the question of predestination and freewill. In it there is no clear indication of the sense in which names of Allah are used. In the traditions we find the arbitrary selection of the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah. No clear picture of the eschatology could be gathered from the Qur'an, and so we find additions and amplifications in the

*Muslim Creed*, p. 19.

traditions which make the happenings of the Day of Judgment, the signs of the Hour, the Balance, the Pond and the intercession of the Prophet, stand out with compelling clearness and confer on them in this form the dignity of fundamental dogma. In addition to these matters there were questions which even if they did not arise directly from the Qur'ān had to be settled in the young community. Such are : the definition of faith and Islam, the relation of faith to works, how to reconcile severe preordination with the energetic working out of one's salvation. In *The Muslim Creed* Wensinck has given a most excellent outline of this early historical process, and what he has there said need not be repeated. However, though our purpose is somewhat different, it is not altogether possible to leave some matters unnoted which he has dealt with.

When considering those materials available outside Islam for the Muslim creedal development, the historian may say that we must first of all present external historical facts, such as the known meeting of certain persons, or the use by some writer of books written by another. Anyone who has tried to do it, knows that it is practically impossible to establish the literary dependence of one writer on another when they are writing in different languages. In such a case we can only point to the similarity in thought, and this is the method we have adopted in the notes on the work of Ibn Miskawaih. It is not, of course, as if we had no material facts to go on. To these we have alluded, but there are still great gaps which may never be filled. Of material facts may be mentioned the certainty that a great deal of bilingual or trilingual work was done by Christian and Muslims in early Islam. For instance, we know that Ibas of Edessa (457) translated both Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia's works from Greek into Syriac ; that Gregory of Nyssa was translated is recorded in the *Fihrist*. John of Damascus may be reasonably considered as available if not in the original Greek yet in some translation or learned through the medium of Christian teachers. We have also seen that there is evidence for the use of the Bible. In what version this was available we do not know with certainty. Dr. Gwynne considered that the text of the Acts in Arabic and of the three larger epistles of St. Paul is a translation of the Peshitta Syriac and the text of the Antilegomena a translation of the unrevised Philoxenian similar to Pocock's version. The quotations in Al Ghazzālī seem to come through either the Coptic or Persian, probably the former, though it may be that these two versions were closely related.

It could be wished that much more tangible evidence could be gathered and closer identifications made of the sources used by Muslim writers, but in the absence of this the comparison of thought has a cumulative value, and the necessity for such a cumulative argument accounts in the main for the undue length of this present work.

We have, therefore, approached a point where something which can be definitely described as theology comes into being on the Muslim side. We have the rise of theological schools of thought, the formation of sects, the clash of opinion within Islam and the defence of dogma. There is also the incoming of rationalism and, after a fluid period, more or less crystallization in an orthodox system. The line of development may be conveniently set out as follows. We have first the primary confession of faith in one God and the expansion of the formula to include the prophethood of Muhammad. There follows the early discussion of the meaning of faith and Islam, of faith and works, the pillars of Islam and the eschatology, the last being possibly influenced by the expectation of an early consummation of the age. As we proceed, a mass of nebulous material is presented, devised in the defence of orthodoxy against heretical sects, i.e., against those who in the opinion of the custodians of the traditional orthodoxy had introduced something which was novel (*bid'a*) and not part of the original data of the faith. When there was material already prepared by the older faiths these were sometimes pressed into the service of the orthodox and sometimes made to serve the turn of the innovators. Out of this nebulous mass rose the early creedal statements known as *Al Fiqh ul Akbar* in various recensions and the *Wasīya* of Abū Hanifa and the *Ibād* of Al Ash'arī which, as Wensinck points out, marks the transition from the creeds to the dogmatic treatises. In addition to these we have the books of heresies which we suspect in some cases of caricaturing the opinions of opponents. The chief of these heresiologies are the compilations by Bağhdādī, Ibn Hazm and Shahrastānī. ✓

What was it that engaged the mind of the early Muslims ? What problems did they discuss ? The first preoccupation seems to have been with the rules of religion. A modern Indian Muslim writer says that while Islam was limited to Arabia, nothing in the way of criticism, debate, analysis, and verification was attempted. That was foreign to the Arab genius. So far as *salāt*, *sawm*, *zakāt*, *hajj*, and the other precepts of the religious law (*fiqh*), the search for precedents, and the regulation of the Islamic state were concerned, much was accomplished at an early date. This was in accord with the Arab tendency to base law on custom. In the domain of creed and faith, however, little was done, and a summary statement of fundamental belief was deemed sufficient. It is natural also that matters affecting the internal regulation of the Muslim state should have the precedence in the very early days.<sup>1</sup>

Next we find that matters which arose out of the political character of Islam and the early political antagonisms and events in the early Caliphate become the subjects of momentous debate. The early Shi'ite roots are here. One of the questions in the early debates was

<sup>1</sup> Shibli : *'Ilm ul Kalām*

the legitimacy or otherwise of rebellion against an unjust ruler.<sup>1</sup> To this must be related the Khārijite heresy. The position with regard to this early sect was that the aristocracy of Mecca had assumed power; instead of the party of the pious who had followed Muhammad in his days of flight and desperation, and who had been first and foremost in their zeal for religion, those people who had resisted the Prophet till the arbitration of the sword had been invoked, and who were then politically won over, had now become the rulers of Islam, and the sons of the Prophet's persecutors sat in the seats of authority. The Khārijites made a fiery puritan protest, and their battle cry was "Leadership to the best Muslim". To the same set of circumstances the sect of the Murjites owes its origin. This sect arose through a different reaction, from those who felt the necessity to reconcile the *fait accompli*, namely, the ascendancy of the Umayyads, with the divine society of Islam and to find a *modus vivendi* in the days of strife in the early Caliphate. The sect probably represented people who wished to avoid strife, the peace-loving who desired above all else to remain neutral. In the *Kitāb ul Aghānī*<sup>2</sup> the following description is given of the Murjites: "We postpone solution of doubtful questions and speak truly of those who do wrong and are wayward. All Muslims we reckon to be members of the community of Islam. A sin does not make anyone a polytheist if he testifies to belief in one God. What God has ordained in the world cannot be avoided and whatsoever he has ordained is right. Concerning the dispute between 'Alī and 'Uthmān we are not prepared to judge. 'I know not whether they have acted according to the commands of the Qur'ān. God knows what deeds they have done, for every creature must one day stand alone before God.'" In the Murjites we see the temporizers and they were inevitably in the opposite camp to the Khārijites. The latter were the zealots, and the former were the quietists.

We next come to questions more definitely theological. Though some of these had their origin in the political circumstances referred to above, others arose through the influx of many people into the Muslim fold. Doctrinal disputation began when Persian, Copt, Syrian, and Greek entered the ranks of Islam. These, says one writer,<sup>3</sup> forsook what was manifestly opposed to Islam, but retained many beliefs which they had formerly held and which apparently did not conflict with Islam. There must be a good deal of truth in this, but when the same writer goes on to give as his illustration of the complications which arose, "Jewish" anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms, such as God grieving, His (*sic*) wrestling with Jacob and suffering injury in the course of it, these can hardly be considered as much

<sup>1</sup> *Baġhdādī*, Pt. III, ii.

<sup>2</sup> xiii. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Shibli: *op. cit.*

different from the anthropomorphisms in the Qur'ān, and literalist explanations of these were as likely to occur to the Arab mind as to any Rabbinical school with which the Arabs might become acquainted. It is not uncommon to find a distinction drawn by Muslim writers between two kinds of theological dialectic (*kalām*), one directed towards the internal dissension within Islam itself and the other devised in opposition to philosophy. This is to ignore the necessity for a defence against Christianity with its highly speculative theological thought. The difficulty of unravelling the tangled skein may be seen in the case of the Mu'tazilites, or rather their predecessors the Qadarites, those early champions of the freewill of man. Here there are traceable the circumstances of the time and the influence of Christian ideas. The circumstances are these. Mu'āwiya had overthrown 'Ali and had established his Caliphate at Damascus. He was of the old aristocracy and was not at all pious. He seems to have been little inclined to orthodoxy. The faithful were aghast at the new turn which affairs had taken. The Caliph was the vicegerent of God, the earthly symbol of the theocracy. How could wine-bibbers and profligates rule the community of God ? The Umayyads could reply that they were in their position by divine preordination. This would suffice for those who believed in predestination, but what about a sect which did not accept such a view ? The Qadarites certainly did not, but because the Umayyads were not too much concerned either way so long as they remained in power, they showed tolerance even to the Qadarites so long as this did not threaten their security. Thus, on the one hand, the Qadarites showed themselves to be pious Muslims making an ethical protest, but, on the other hand, they depart in their doctrine from the main stream of Muslim thought and are for the most part regarded as heretics. For the necessity of their ethical thought they accepted the tenet which specially distinguished the Eastern Church, namely, the freewill of man. It is illustrations of this description which urge caution in ascribing the origin of a doctrine to any one cause, and it is one of the reasons why, though it has the great authority of Von Kremer behind it, we hesitate to go so far as he does in saying that all was due to the influence of the Christian theology. But it is equally erroneous to make a categorical division of two sorts of Muslim dialectic which ignores the part which Christianity played.

Even through the days of the conquest the defence of Islam was of vast importance. It should be remembered that the defence was primarily of the traditional elements, but, as we have already seen, the dogmatic elements themselves as contained in the Qur'ān and *Hadīth* owed something to Christianity and Judaism. They were at any rate in relation to Christianity and Judaism, even if this was sometimes and in some degree antagonistic rather than assimilative. But the defence is not only a rigid adhesion to what is written or orally

transmitted but gradually, very gradually, it is conceived in a manner which again and again suggests the Christian theological statements. Moreover, in addition to what is largely and originally theological dogma, there is a body of philosophical material and a method adopted for the recasting of the Islamic data into a positive philosophical form—not completely unlike what had been devised before, but by its new union with a new mass of dogmatic material, sufficiently distinct to form a new system and easily to be differentiated from the body of Christian and other theological material with which there was more or less familiarity or affinity.

Thus, while we can say that some Christian influence was at work, we must not consider that this was the only influence. Undoubtedly some of the major influences at work were not religious or theological at all, as we have shown. It should be remarked that Von Kremer draws attention to the two points of discussion in these early days, and sees a transference of the topic and the argument from the Christian circle to the Muslim, particularly with respect to the Being and Attributes of God and the question of the freewill of man, and everything we have discovered bears this out. The Murjites also showed that they had much in common with the Eastern Christian thought which is again and again, as expounded, e.g., by Theodore of Mopsuestia, opposed to the Khārijite views. They were, for instance, against the doctrine of eternal punishment just as Theodore was. We shall presently examine these matters in detail.

The adjustment to the external world of thought was, of course, not exclusively to Christianity. We have in these early days a rationalist movement. The Mu'tazilites were the advocates of the use of reason (*aql*) in distinction from the devotees of precedent (*nagl*). It is true that they were philosophisers rather than philosophers but, as someone has observed, their scepticism was truly Greek. "Better fifty doubts than one certainty", is the saying of one of their number.

It is interesting to gather from a book like Baghdādi's *Al Fiqh bain al Firaq* some idea of the rise of the early sects of Islam. One of the wonders is that so many rose in such a short space of time, although there is some evidence that they were artificially expanded and multiplied to bring them to the seventy-two required by the tradition reported from Muhammad. Khārijites, Shi'ites, Qadarites and Murjites rose almost immediately. The three first mentioned were anti-Umayyad. There is still much affinity between the Shi'ites, the Qadarites, and the later Mu'tazilites on certain theological points, notably on the subject of the essential attributes, the use of reason, and the vision of God. The Mu'tazilites rose about A.D. 723 through the teaching of the two great pioneers Wāsil b. 'Aṭā' and 'Amr b. Ubaid, during the reign of the Caliph Hishām. Ibn Hanbal (b. 780) is an uncompromising opponent of the school and exhibits an unflinch-

ing conservatism opposed to the use of reason, and an almost entirely uncritical respect for tradition. Other sects are the Jahmites (from Jahm b. Ṣafwān d. A.D. 748), extreme predestinarians or Jabrites, Ḥā'itites, who are distinguished as believers in incarnation (c. A.D. 835), Jubbā'ites (915), Bahshamites (933), etc. The literalists and the Ash'arites can hardly be classed as sects, but in all probability there were extreme anthropomorphists from the beginning as, for instance, Hishām b. al Hakam (early eighth century), and it may be legitimate to class his followers as a sect. While Ash'arism may not be classed as a sect, yet it was the school of thought which thwarted the Mu'tazilites, who might otherwise have become the chief exponents of Islam. The reason for the victory of Al Ash'arī (b. 873) was probably because he was the author of a compromise. That compromise is hard to define to-day, and it is even more difficult to interpret the full significance of the modification which Al Ash'arī is supposed to have introduced into the doctrine of predestination. In some directions the Ash'arite doctrine can hardly be considered a compromise at all, but rather expresses the most uncompromising absolutism in its doctrine of the power of God, denying nature to things and lending itself to be the germinating ground of a devastating atomism. The compromise is seen in the doctrine of *kasb*, the human acquirement of acts which have already been created by God, and in the admission of reason if not to establish the truth at least to defend it. If we are right in considering that the formula *bilā kaif* used in relation to the mode of the inherence of divine attributes in the essence, etc., is an echo of the Alexandrian *ἄποιος*, meaning "having no quality", we may conclude from this and other evidence that though Al Ash'arī became the champion of the reactionaries, he himself was not untouched by philosophy and was thus marked off from the extremism of Ibn Hanbal. In short, it may be said that both Al Ash'arī and Al Ghazzālī present us with a strange problem, and it is very difficult—if not impossible—to classify either of them. We are not even certain whether the system which goes by the name of Al Ash'arī is really his, at any rate in the form we have it to-day. It may be that the difficulty in classifying either of these great men is the very reason why the former came to be regarded as the orthodox *par excellence* and the latter, in spite of his elusiveness, is regarded with such great reverence at the present time—however little this reverence leads to his serious study. The two stages which we have represented in these two men seem to have been first, some sort of synthesis by Al Ash'arī which modified crudities unacceptable to the growing intelligence of Islam and at the same time guarded against the extremer rationalism which had grown up, and second, a further synthesis of Ash'arism with mysticism by Al Ghazzālī, which redeemed the Ash'arite doctrine from a dry and unattractive formalism. Thus, what we have at the end of this period and before Al Ghazzālī, is a

concession to intellectualism which falls short of pure rationalism, and an acknowledgment of the cogency of tradition with modifications.

During these early years Aristotelianism is fought, but its method is gradually adopted, pure rationalism is forsaken for rationalism plus traditionalism, pantheistic mysticism and illuminism are modified by the Peripatetic logic and by an insistence upon the value of the Law, the *Shari'a*. The problems which led to the rise of the sects have been variously stated. In the *Dabistān*<sup>1</sup> we find it asserted that the foundations of the seventy-two sects according to Māturidī and Al Ghazzālī were six : *tashbih*, which is the ascription of qualities to God in a mean or inferior manner ; *taṭīl* (*kenosis*), which is divesting God of all essential attributes ; *jabr*, which is the denial of any freedom of action to man ; *qadar*, which is the doctrine that man is the creator of his own acts ; *rāfd*, which is undue devotion to 'Ali and abhorrence of the three Caliphs who preceded him, and *naṣb*, which represents equally undue devotion to the first two Caliphs Abū Bakr and 'Umar at the expense of 'Ali. Maulana Shibli<sup>2</sup> thinks that the principal matters of debate in the formative period of Islamic theology were as follows : " 1. The anthropomorphic expressions used of God in the Qur'ān. The question was whether these were to be regarded as actually true of the Deity or only metaphorically. The traditionalists and the Ash'arīya, the Corporealists (holding the doctrine of *tajṣīm*) and the Anthropomorphists (holding the doctrine of *tashbih*) held the former view and the Mu'tazilites held the latter. The former believed that God has hands, feet, etc., though they interpreted this in different ways. The Mu'tazilites, in the interests of a particular doctrine of the unity of God, denies in a sense even the divine attributes. Out of this the following questions arise : If God's attributes are eternal (*qadīm*) this involves pluralities of eternals, and if the attributes are originated and temporal (*hādīth*) then God, because He is the suppositum of temporal attributes, must have had a beginning.

" To escape the first difficulty the Mu'tazilites said that there are no attributes separate from God but all those things which in us are the result of our possession of attributes are from God's essence. The Traditionalists thought that this would mean the denial of the divine attributes altogether and so they clung to the view that the attributes of God were separate from His essence.

" 2. The question of freedom. On the one hand we do not seem free, and on the other, if we are not free then what about rewards and punishments, virtues and vices ? What room is there for desert or merit ? In the Qur'ān there are two sorts of verses. What man does, God causes him to do. ' Say, all is from Allah ' (Sura iv. 80). On the other hand there are others which assert man's responsibility for his

own acts. ‘What befalls thee of bad is from thyself’ (Sura iv. 81). So two opinions arose in Islam. The Jabrites held that men were compelled (*majbūr*) and the Mu’tazilites held that man is absolutely in control of his own deeds, but because God gave him this power, there is no difference to God’s absolute sovereignty. In this matter the Ash’arites prefer the doctrine of *kash* and this signifies the possibility of the acquirement of an act by a person although God is the author of all acts.

“3. Whether faith embraces works or not. . . . and 4. Whether reason or authority is to be preferred or how should these be defined? The Ash’arites preferred *Naql*, which is scriptural authority, and the Mu’tazilites *Aql*, i.e., reason. Under this heading the chief point at issue is whether the basis of obligation is rational,<sup>1</sup> the Ash’arites holding that nothing is good or bad of itself and the Mu’tazilites that everything is basically good or bad. The Ash’arites said, ‘What the Lawgiver says is good becomes good and what He says is bad becomes bad.’ The Mu’tazilites averred that the Lawgiver calls that good which is good of itself.” This is the old problem of whether a thing is good because God wills it or whether He wills it because it is good. “Further, the Ash’arites said that God could and does command impossibilities. The Mu’tazilites and Abū Ḥanifa held the contrary. And in the same connection, the Ash’arites said that it was not incumbent on God to do justly while the Mu’tazilites said it was. The Ash’arites said that God could punish a man for worshipping Him and reward him for sin and if He did so it would not be unjust. The Mu’tazilites said God could never do so and if He did, it would be tyranny and injustice.”

Nowadays in India there is a good deal of argument as to whether the Mu’tazilite sect should not be regarded as orthodox. Maulana Shibli quotes some writers to that effect. “Concerning the Mu’tazilites, Jalāl ud Dīn Dawānī in *Sharḥ ul ‘Aqā’id ul ‘Adudīya* writes, ‘The Mu’tazilites are not unbelievers.’ Taqī ud Dīn Subkī, a famous traditionalist writes in *Sharḥ Iḥyā us Salām*, ‘These two schools, Ash’arite and Mu’tazilite, are equally lawful and both are schools of scholasticism, though of the two the Ash’arite is the more balanced.’ Because the Mu’tazilites usually followed the Hanafi school of jurisprudence they are mentioned in the *Tabaqāt ul Ḥanafīya* (by ‘Abdullah us Suwaydī, A.D. 1543)<sup>2</sup> and there they are mentioned with as much respect as the other Hanafi doctors. It is written of Husayn b. ‘Alī, ‘There was no one his equal in *fiqh* and dialectic’ (*kalām*) and of Zamakhsharī (author of a famous commentary on the Qur’ān) it is said that he was one of the great Hanafites. Rāzī in his *Tafsīr* on Surat ul An’am says, ‘My father, quoting the words of Shaikh ul

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* and Shahrastānī: *Milal wa Nihāl* (Cureton), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Brockelmann: II, 374.

Qāsim Ansārī, said that the thought of the Sunnis is concentrated on the Power and Extent<sup>1</sup> (*was'a*) of God and that of the Mu'tazilites on the Majesty and Perfection of God. Hence, if one considers rightly, both recognise the Majesty and Holiness of God. Although it is so far true to say that one school was mistaken and the other was correct in its opinion.'"<sup>2</sup> Whether the Ash'arite or the Mu'tazilite is the school which most truly represents Islam may be left for the Muslim to decide, for while the latter does approximate more closely in some matters to certain doctrines which are held in Christianity, in other matters it diverges more sharply from Christianity than orthodox Islam does.

We now come to the point when the various doctrines must be examined and viewed in comparison so far as that is possible. In this process we shall remember that the trend of development in each religion must be influenced at every stage by the character of the data provided. Thus in Christian theology, whatever the framework of Hellenistic philosophy or the method dictated by the Greek logic and metaphysic, Christianity must always return to certain fundamental data which are to be found in a convenient form in the Apostles' Creed. To this from the Muslim side may be opposed a similar creedal declaration. That primary creedal declaration will be the simple statement of the unity and the mission of Muhammad, and this is then expanded in the definitions of faith. The doctrine of God must then be developed. It will substitute for the personal distinctions in the Godhead, which the Christian data supply, names of God to be found in the Qur'an or to be derived from statements in that book. Discussions of the Trinity will find their counterpart in the discussion of the attributes of God and how these are to be regarded. On the Christian side the subject of mediation is the next great topic. This in Christian theology is Christological doctrine. In Islam conceptions of mediation will centre in the doctrine of the prophethood. Christianity in its ideas of mediation does not entirely omit conceptions which include angels and prophets, and, on the other hand, Islam does not in its conception of mediation entirely ignore the question of emanation, angels, and the vehicle of revelation. When revelation comes to be discussed there will be found in both a place for scripture, but because of the doctrine of the Word made flesh, Christianity will be disposed to rest revelation crucially on the conception of the giving of God's self-revelation and on Christ as the embodiment of that and its heart and centre.

In the following pages the subjects it is proposed to deal with are : God, His Unity, His Attributes, The Holy Trinity, Anthropomorphism, God's Transcendence, the *via negativa*, the Grace of God, Immanence, the Vision of God, Mediation, Emanation, Logos doctrine, the Incarnation, Prophecy, Scripture, the Ordering of the Universe (including

<sup>1</sup> I.e., the extent of His dignity or rule.

<sup>2</sup> Shibli : *op. cit.*, 28.

Providence, Predestination, Human Freedom, Divine Justice, Authorship of Acts, and Cosmology), the Doctrine of Human Nature, the Soul, Sin, Faith and Works, Soteriology and Eschatology.

#### A. THE BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

##### (I) GOD, THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS EXISTENCE

Both Islam and Christianity, in regard to the question of the existence of God, present the same features. They both have their foundations in sacred scripture which is regarded as a revelation from God and both have a religious feeling for nature which is in the first place stimulated from the Godward side. "The Hebrew thinker came down from his thought of God upon the world ; he did not rise from the world up to his thought of God." <sup>1</sup> This is true also of the Muslim thinker. But in addition both have accepted a large collateral body of argument which seems to take the reverse course from nature to God. This is the Greek element supplied to both in common from the arguments in the *Timaeus* and the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle.<sup>2</sup>

The Quranic message, which does not so much argue for the existence of God as proclaim it, may be illustrated from the following passages. "Verily Allah it is who cleaves out the grain and the date-stone ; He brings forth the living from the dead and it is He who brings the dead from the living. . . . He it is who made for you stars that ye might be guided thereby in the darkness of the land and of the sea. . . . He it is who sends down rain from the heavens and We bring forth therewith crops of everything ; and We bring forth therefrom green things wherefrom we bring forth grain in full ear ; and the palm from its spathe come clusters within reach ; and gardens of grapes and olives and pomegranates." Sura vi. 95 ff. "Do they not look then at the camel how she is created ? And at the heaven how it is supported ? And at the mountains how they are set up ? And at the earth how it is spread out." Sura lxxxviii. 16 ff.<sup>3</sup> With these passages may be compared Ps. xix., Rom. i. 20, Acts xiv. 17, etc. Thus the scriptures of both Islam and Christianity lend themselves to an appeal to creation in support of the belief in God. When therefore we find in Christian or Muslim theology formal arguments on the cosmological or teleological pattern the real incentive to this is the scripture to which each appeals. That which is expressed in the sacred books not so much as argument becomes the basis of argument when the reader passes from the purer devotional emotions awakened within him and allows free play to intellectual curiosity. We may say therefore that on the plane of a religious appreciation of nature the Bible and the Qur'an stand

<sup>1</sup> Davidson : *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> For the references to the Greek arguments see the notes to *Miskawaih passim*.

<sup>3</sup> See also Sura xvi. 8 ff., Sura xci. 1 ff., Sura lxxx. 24 ff. and Sura lxxix. 27 ff.

together and the intellectual formulation of arguments for the existence of God which stands in relation to this religious appreciation is similar in Jew, Christian and Muslim.

When such arguments are set forth they are in intellectual form, but they owe most to a previously prevailing mood and a mind directed by a previously experienced emotion. The rhapsody of revelation has been caught. Thus strictly speaking it cannot be maintained that the starting point is creation in any absolute sense. There is the mind which is aware, the prophetic mind if you will, and the material on which the mind is to exercise. If the mind falters saying, "Canst thou by searching find out God ?" it may do so in the mood of faith or in the mood of scepticism. It may ask the question in awe at the splendour of the divine and the littleness of man, or it may ask it in cynicism and bitterness, or in simple desperation. It may also ask the question calmly and judicially in no way perturbed and making an implicit inquiry into the limits of human intellect. When this latter is the case the prior commitment to faith is not necessarily disturbed. The limits of argument may be clearly understood and the soul still bow in adoration before God. The pity is when the devotional spirit suffers fatigue and the negations which the intellect multiplies overwhelm the "everlasting yea" of the human spirit to its Maker.

An illustration of what is meant may be found in the way in which calamity is regarded when the spirit of man is directed to its understanding or endurance. The sense of calamity which is such a marked feature of the prophetic utterances of the Old Testament and of the Qur'an, which we know from experience has often driven men into a mood of denial, is, nevertheless, because of the previously determined faith of the prophet or the commitment of the human spirit to God, stimulating to faith. It is as if man had to bring an interpreting mind to these things and that it is already biassed. Having looked within, man looks again without. The scrutiny of order and design, and the emotion of awe and wonder at the world in all its manifold splendour and magnificence may induce, on the one hand, an enthusiasm for science or, on the other, a stimulus to religion. If the latter is to happen, something must be added to mere phenomena. Something of the same sort of process is conceived by Muslims in regard to the appreciation of miracle as the work of a prophet where, when the matter is reviewed rationally, the argument seems to be moving in a circle, some prior inclination or perhaps intuition influencing the verdict as to whether it is a divine work or legerdemain.

Religious men on both sides have sometimes expressed scepticism at the validity of the arguments which have been introduced for the existence of God. In early Islam there was a tendency to look askance at the use of reason to substantiate anything about God. What was contained in the Qur'an must be accepted and nothing added. There

was even to be a rigid observance of the names to be found in the Qur'ān. This must have been one of the motives in fixing the ninety-nine names. Shibli reminds us that Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 965) was exiled for saying that God was uncircumscribed (*lā mahdūd*).<sup>1</sup> Similar prejudice was expressed against the use of terms like "substance" (*jawhar*) for God. This would be because the terms were unscriptural. The same writer also says that it was unacceptable to say that God was in every place, but this was deemed to be equivalent to proclaiming oneself a Jahmite and tantamount to infidelity.<sup>2</sup> Evidence for this reluctance to use philosophical terminology may be found in the quotations from the traditionalists in *Ijtīmā' ul Juyūsh il Islāmiya* by Shams ud Dīn, b. Qayyim (thirteenth century A.D.).<sup>3</sup>

Such a protest is understandable if it arose from a desire to retain the doctrine of God within the limits of supernatural revelation and in the interests of piety against a secular metaphysic, but it raises the whole question of the relation of reason and revelation.

Following the Muslim theological process and analysing it in its stages, Shibli<sup>4</sup> comes to the conclusion that there is the following gradual development of theology. "In the first stage God is held to be corporeal, seated on the Throne, possessing hands, feet and face. God set His hand on the shoulder of Muhammad and the Prophet felt that it was cold. In the second stage God is still held to be corporeal, having hands and face and legs, but all these are not like ours. In the third stage God is conceived to have neither body, hands nor face. Such words in the Qur'ān have not the real meaning at all but are metaphorical and allegorical. God is Hearer, Seer and Knower but all these attributes are in addition to His quiddity (*māhiya*). In the fourth stage God's attributes are neither identical with His Essence nor alien to it (*lā 'ayn wa lā ghayr*). In the fifth stage God's essence is absolutely simple. In it there is no sort of multiplicity whatever. His essence does the work of all His attributes. His essence is Knowing, Seeing, Hearing, Powerful, etc. In the sixth and last stage God is conceived as Absolute Existence, i.e., His existence is His very quiddity. This takes the form of the Oneness of Existence (*Wahdat ul Wujūd*), where we arrive at the point where philosophy and Sufism meet. It must not be supposed that these stages represent a chronological order in which the later superseded the earlier. Representatives of the different points of view were contemporaneous and still are."

The summary is interesting because it assumes that there will be a dual appeal to revelation and reason and a progressive expansion of the

<sup>1</sup> Brockelmann says it was because he taught that prophethood was a combination of 'Ilm and 'Amal, where again it would be the philosophical terminology which was disliked. (See *Encyc. of Islām* art. Ibn Ḥibbān).

<sup>2</sup> Shibli : 'Ilm ul Kalām, p. 26 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* Brock, II, 106.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, 15 ff.

province of the latter. This writer has a rationalistic tendency which, of course, many orthodox people would not care to accept. But it should not be forgotten that whether reason is accepted as a co-ordinate principle in revelation in Islam or not, rationalism has come to a permanent place in various forms in the Islamic system. Shibli argues that the appeal to reason was primitive in Islam and advances the following arguments.<sup>1</sup>

"Abū Huraira reported that the Prophet said that the grief and lamentation of the living was an affliction to the dead (for whom they sorrowed). Ayesha said: This cannot be, because one man cannot be held accountable for another's sins. One of the companions said that Muhammad said the dead could hear. Ayesha said: The dead cannot hear because God Himself says, 'Thou canst not make the dead to hear !' (Sura xxvii. 82). Abū Huraira related that Muhammed said the eating of a thing cooked by fire spoiled the ritual ablution. 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd replied, 'If that is so then to perform the ablution with hot water is unlawful.' Now it is certain that these people had no intention of repudiating the words of the prophet, but they must have thought that the prophet could not have said anything which was contrary to reason."

However this may be, and it looks like special pleading, there is no lack but rather a great profusion of rational arguments now in use in Islam for the existence and attributes of God. When the Philosophers or the Mu'tazilites in the first place appealed to reason, they followed in the path which had been laid down for them before. For the combination of reason and revelation they had the precedent of the school of Alexandria. For Clement of Alexandria the channel of revelation was not simply Scripture but also abstract reasoning. His idea was that the Scripture is the means whereby there is bestowed on man an idea of God which has a preliminary value as a purification whereby spiritual insight may have an opportunity to develop. From this the mind proceeds to analysis and elimination. This process of elimination in Clement is not much dissimilar to the *ta'wil* of the Mu'tazilites and others.

Of the formal arguments it may be said that there is not a great deal of difference in what we find, e.g., in Ibn Miskawaih and Al Fārābī and in the earlier pre-Islamic theology. Examples of the idea of the ascent through nature to God, or from the works of God to the Worker are to be found in Philo.<sup>2</sup> Similarly the argument for an efficient and moving cause which has its roots in Greek metaphysics is found in the same writer,<sup>3</sup> and the argument to a necessary first cause also.<sup>4</sup> Ibn

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Abr.* 16 (II, 12), *Monarch.* i. 4 (II, 216-17), *Praem. et Poen.*, 7 (II, 414-15).

<sup>3</sup> *Mundi Op.*, 1 (I, 2), *De Prof.*, 2 (I, 547).

<sup>4</sup> *Conf. Ling.*, 25 (I, 423).

Miskawaih's arguments from change and motion are Aristotelian. They may be found in the work of Diodorus of Tarsus entitled *Against Fate*.<sup>1</sup> In this book we find the cosmological argument. The world is subject to change and change implies beginning. Underlying the changeable there must be something which is itself not subject to change but stable and immutable. Diodorus gives, in addition, a simple form of teleological argument pointing to the variety to be discerned in nature and the wisdom which is involved in the order. Similar appeal to the order of the universe is found in Ibn Miskawaih. Both Al Fārābī and Miskawaih contribute the argument to the *primum movens*, the assertion that an infinite series is impossible, and common to both Christian and Muslim arguments is the distinction between the potential and the necessary, and the postulating of one who is the necessarily existing first cause.

In John of Damascus<sup>2</sup> the argument from change is little different from that found in Miskawaih. "All things that exist are either created or uncreated. If then things are created it follows that they are also wholly mutable. For things whose existence originated in change, must also be subject to change, whether it be that they perish or that they become other than they are by act of will. But if things are uncreated they must in all consistency be also wholly immutable. For things which are opposed in the nature of their existence must also be opposed in the mode of their existence, that is to say, must have opposite qualities: who then will refuse to grant that all existing things, not only such as come within the province of the senses, but even the very angels, are subject to change and transformation and movement of various kinds? For the things pertaining to the rational world, I mean angels and spirits and demons, are subject to changes of will, whether it is a progression or a retrogression in goodness, whether a struggle or a surrender; while the others suffer changes of generation and corruption, of increase and decrease, of quality and of movement in space. Things then that are mutable are also wholly created. But things which are created must be the work of some maker, and the maker cannot have been created. For if he had been created, he also must have been created by someone, and so on till we arrive at something uncreated. The Creator, then, being uncreated is also wholly immutable. And what could this be other than Deity?"

Similarly, in the same chapter, the Damascene approaches the teleological argument with his emphasis on providence and order. "Even the very continuity of the creation and its preservation and government, teach us that there does exist a Deity who supports and preserves and ever provides for this universe. For how could opposite natures such as fire and water, air and earth, have combined with each

<sup>1</sup> See Photius in Migne: *Pat. Graec.*, 103, 833.

<sup>2</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. III (*P.G.*, 94, 793 f.).

other so as to form one complete world, and continue to abide in indissoluble union, were there not some omnipotent power which bound them together and always preserved them from dissolution ?

" What is it that gave order to things of heaven and things of earth and all those things which move in the air and in the water—or rather to what was in existence before these, namely, to heaven and earth and air and the elements of fire and water ? What was it that distributed these ? What was it that set these in motion and keeps them in their unceasing and unhindered course ? Was it not the Artificer of these things ? And He who hath implanted in everything the law whereby the universe is carried on and directed ? . . . Is it not He who created them and brought them into existence ? For we shall not attribute such power to chance (*automaton*). "

The limits which have to be set to the arguments are noted by both sets of writers.<sup>1</sup> Some hesitation is expressed about the validity of the leap from nature to God. Sometimes it is suggested that to have a knowledge of the operations and powers of God is not the same as to have a knowledge of His being or essence, but the invariable reply is that lack of complete knowledge does not destroy the value of knowledge as far as it goes. There is almost unanimous testimony also that it is impossible for there to be knowledge of God in His essence and thus the limitations of the arguments used are admitted. For instance, Gregory of Nyssa and many others say that we cannot know the Essence because this would mean that our knowledge of God would be immediate. It is, however, possible for us to know God mediately through His powers or energies and operations in creation. John of Damascus also says, " The Nature of Deity is incomprehensible. It is plain that there is a God, but what He is in His essence and nature is absolutely incomprehensible and unknowable."<sup>2</sup> The Alexandrians also felt that there was a need of revelation and some would seem to have gone so far as to hold that there could be no middle way between the self-revelation of God and an absolute scepticism. It should be remembered, however, that this " revelation " was conceived by them as twofold, Scripture and the inspiration of the intellect.

## (II) THE UNITY OF GOD

It was the first interest of Islam to maintain the monotheism which it had won after its experiences of paganism. The roots of the struggle for that monotheism probably lie far back and much earlier than Muhammad. That there was monotheism in Arabia alongside the paganism seems to be indicated by the presence of Jewish tribes and by the obscure sect of the Hanifs if by nothing else. Semitic story, if

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Al Fawz ul Asghar*, Cap. I.

<sup>2</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, I, Cap. IV (P.G., 94, 797).

we take the Old Testament alone as an example, shows the struggle for monotheism against paganism in a most graphic way. No race seems to have had such violent upheavals in conceiving its ideas of Theocracy as the Semitic. This is true of the Jew and true of the Arab. Indeed, the last violent throes may legitimately be called a world-upheaval. The Qur'ān witnesses to the intense zeal for the unity of God which characterized the preaching of Muhammad. "Say, 'Praise belongs to God, and peace be upon His servants whom He has chosen !' Is God best or what they associate with Him ? He who created the heavens and the earth and sends down on you rain from heaven ! And we cause to grow therewith gardens fraught with beauty ; ye could not cause the trees thereof to grow. Is there a god with God ? Nay, but they are a people who make peers with Him. He who made the earth, settled and placed among it rivers, and placed upon it firm mountains, and places between the two seas a barrier, is there a god with God ? Nay, but most of them know not. He who answers the distressed when he calls upon Him and removes the evil and makes you successors in the earth, is there a god with God ?" (Sura xxvii. 61 ff.); "God, there is no god but He, the Living, the Self-subsistent. Slumber takes Him not nor sleep. His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. Who is it that intercedes with Him without His permission ? He knows what is before them and what behind them and they comprehend naught of His knowledge but of what He pleases. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and it tires Him not to guard them both, for He is High and Grand" (Sura ii. 256) ; "Will they associate with Him those who cannot create anything, but they themselves are created, which have no power to help them and cannot even help themselves ?" (Sura vii. 191). Beside these are many other passages<sup>1</sup> proclaiming the unity of God. This is asserted against paganism and against the Jews and Christians as, e.g., Sura iv. 169, and against dualism as in Sura xvi. 53, while, however, it is recognized in many places that the God of Jews and Christians is One and the same as Allah, e.g., Sura xxix. 45.

When the terms of unity—*wāhid*, *ahad*, *awhad*, and *mutawakkhid*—are used of Allah they signify, according to the expositors, He who is *One in Essence*, having no like nor peer nor second. He is the *One in Attributes* beside whom there is no other. He is also the utterly simple, insusceptible to division into parts and having no double. Ibu Athir and the *Lisān ul 'Arab* would make the terms signify that He has always been alone. Of the strange name for God in the Sura of the Unity namely, *Aṣ Samad*, Lane says it means the Being which "continues or continues for ever after His creatures have perished", or "The Creator of everything, of whom nothing is independent and whose

<sup>1</sup> E.g., The chapter of the Unity, Sura cxii, the end of Sura xxiii, xxi. 25, lxxi. 20, Sura ix. 30 ff., Sura xxv. 1-3, Sura xxxv. 3.

unity everything indicates, or one who takes no nourishment or food.”<sup>1</sup>

Robertson Smith said, “What is often described as the natural tendency of Semitic religion towards ethical monotheism is in the main nothing more than a consequence of the alliance of religion with monarchy.”<sup>2</sup> When the Qur’ān uses the term *Al Haqq* as a name for God, it is speaking in terms of a unique monarchic right belonging to the One God. Thus in Sura xx. 113, “Exalted then be God the King, the Truth (the rightful King).” He alone possesses a right over His creatures.<sup>3</sup> The term signifies that God is the true God as opposed to false gods. Thus, e.g., in Sura x. 31, “There shall every soul prove what it has sent on before ; and they shall be returned unto God, their God, their true Sovereign and that which they devised shall stray away from them,” and again, Sura xviii. 40 ff., “And he said, ‘Would that I had never associated anyone with my Lord ! ’ And he has not any party to help him beside God, nor was he helped. In such a case the patronage is God’s the True. He is best at rewarding and best at an issue.” A similar conception of the divine monarchy or the theocracy may be seen in the Old Testament and in comparison the ethical kingship of the Old Testament is much in advance of the conception found in the pages of the Qur’ān.

Nöldeke has written, “The complete victory of monotheism, it is true, was first achieved within historical times among the Israelites ; but strong tendencies in the same direction appear also among the other Semitic peoples. Renan is also right in reckoning Christianity as only in part a Semitic religion, for even its origin presupposed a world fructified by Greek ideas, and it was mainly through non-Semitic influences that it became a world religion. . . . Islam, on the other hand, in its pure Arabic form, the doctrine of Muhammad and his disciples . . . is the logical perfection of Semitic religion, with the importation of only one fundamental idea, though that is indeed a very important one, namely, the conception of a resurrection and of a life in heaven which had already been adopted by Judaism and Christianity.” There is a great deal in this statement with which it is impossible to agree, but our main concern is with this alleged “pure Arabic form”. It is to be doubted whether there ever was a pure Arabic form, and certainly Islam as it now exists cannot be regarded in that way. Islam itself came into a world “fructified with Greek ideas”, and it is a process of assimilation to that world which we see in the centuries under review.

Christianity, whether it had profited or suffered loss for its associa-

<sup>1</sup> The term seems to mean “solid”. It is a strange thing that it is sometimes used in criticism of certain heretics that their view leads to the conception of a “hollow” God.

<sup>2</sup> *Religion of the Semites*, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> Suras ix. 13, xxxiii. 37, ix. 63.

tion with Greek thought, had nevertheless maintained strongly the monotheistic doctrine, and even pressed Greek thought into the service of the doctrine. Take, for instance, John of Damascus, who is typical and whom the later Islamic theologians did not disdain to follow in arguments for the Oneness of God. In his *De Fide Orthodoxa*<sup>1</sup> we find the following arguments. He quotes Exod. xx. 2, 3; Deut. vi. 4; Isa. xlvi. 10; and also John xvii. 3. Deity is perfect. If there are many gods there must be difference between them. If not they are the same. If there is difference, what becomes of their perfection? . . . One God would limit the other. . . . How could the world be ruled by many and saved from the dissolution and strife between the rulers?" That argument from mutual prevention we come across again and again in later Muslim theologians.

An enthusiasm for monotheism and a dread of polytheism led to a doctrine of the unity of God which affected the conception of the divine essence. Men were not content to assert the unity of God as a defence against a plurality of gods, but sought also to extrude from the conception of the divine every vestige of multiplicity. Cook in his notes on the *Religion of the Semites*<sup>2</sup> says that polydæmonism provided the element in which Semitic monotheism strove for the conception of the unity of God. In his enumeration of the tendencies which make for monotheism he states first "co-ordination of attributes or functions". The Mu'tazilite statement of Islam shows this tendency. It realized that the division of attributes has often led to belief in a god for every power of nature. When Origen defends the Trinity against Celsus, he shows the like enthusiasm for an inner co-ordination or circumcession as a sort of perfect mutual interpenetration within the deity to save the unity and indivisibility of God. His strong feeling on the matter is expressed in his words, "To ascribe division to an incorporeal substance is not only an act of extreme impiety but of the crassest folly". He goes on to insist that the unity of God is a perfect moral harmony,<sup>3</sup> that it is a transcendent unity and in respect to the Trinity particularly an identity of will. He specially speaks of its transcendent character as a unity appropriate to One who is even beyond being.<sup>4</sup>

Philo preceded him with the like thoughts. God is "alone and one, not a composite but a simple nature". All other things involve plurality. For instance, man consists of soul and body. The soul has rational and irrational parts and the body is made up of the hot, the cold, the heavy, the light, the dry, the moist. "But God is not a compound, nor is He composed of many ingredients, but is unmixed

<sup>1</sup> Bk. I, Cap. V (*P.G.*, 94, 800 f.).

<sup>2</sup> P. 526.

<sup>3</sup> *Contra Celsum*, viii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vi. 64.

with anything else. For whatever might be added to God is either superior or inferior or equal to Him. But there is neither an equal nor a superior to God and nothing inferior is joined to Him, otherwise He Himself would become inferior, and in such a case He would also be corruptible, which it is unlawful to suppose. God therefore has been ranked in conformity with one and the unity ; or rather even the unity is ranked in conformity with the one God. For all number, like time, is younger than the universe, while God is older than the universe and its Creator.”<sup>1</sup>

Though Philo stands so long before the Mu’tazilites, his thought shows strong similarities with theirs. Probably we have in both a Semitic urge to monotheism rendered more insistent by real peril from polytheism and supported by the philosophical mind. Thus we find in both the denial of the attributes in the interests of the unity, of which more later, and that Philo was alive to the danger of polytheism is quite clear.<sup>2</sup> In one place he says of the text “I am thy God” that it is only figurative. It must not be taken as true in a literal sense because this would involve God being brought within the sphere of relations of association and affinity. God is self-contained and beyond all relations. The Alexandrian school followed much of this very closely through Clement, who speaks of the Monad who is reached after stripping, to the neo-Platonists with their conception of the transcendent One, to Pseudo-Dionysius, who speaks of the One in the same way, and whose influence on Muslim mystical thought has often been remarked. The position of Christian theology with regard to what we may speak of as the internal unity of the Godhead, i.e., the unity of the essence or the simplicity of God, is well shown by John of Damascus and it would be well to quote what he says in full.

“ We believe in One God, one Principle, without beginning, uncreated, unbegotten, imperishable, immortal, everlasting, infinite, uncircumscribed, boundless, of infinite power, simple, uncompounded, incorporeal, without flux, passionless, unchangeable, unalterable, unseen, the fountain of goodness and justice, the light of the mind, inaccessible ; a power known by no measure, measurable by His own will alone (for everything He wills He can), creator of all created thing, seen or unseen, of all the maintainer and preserver, for all the provider, master and lord and king over all, with an endless and immortal kingdom : having no contrary, filling all, by nothing encompassed, but rather Himself the encompasser and maintainer and original possessor of the universe, occupying all essences intact, and extending beyond all things, and being separated from all essence as being superessential and above all things and Absolute God, Absolute Goodness and Absolute Fulness : determining all sovereignties and ranks, being

<sup>1</sup> *Leg. All.*, II, i. (I, 66-7).

<sup>2</sup> *Conf. Ling.*, 33 (I, 431).

placed above all sovereignty and rank, above essence and life and word and thought : being Himself very light and goodness and life and essence, inasmuch as He does not derive His being from another, i.e., of those that exist : but being Himself the fountain of being to all that is, of life to the living, of reason to those that have reason ; to all the cause of all good ; perceiving all things even before they have become ; one essence, one divinity, one power, one will, one energy, one beginning, one authority, one dominion, one sovereignty, made known in three perfect subsistences and adored with one adoration, believed in and ministered to by all rational creation, united without confusion and divided without separation (which indeed transcends thought)."<sup>1</sup> It will be noted that this is in the chapter of his book devoted to the Holy Trinity.

It would perhaps be better to deal here with the peculiar Mu'tazilite views of the Unity than to defer it till we discuss the attributes, although it involves questions which we shall have to take up later when considering the doctrine of the divine attributes. The Mu'tazilites arrogated to themselves the title of the "Adherents of the Unity",<sup>2</sup> and this particular title indicates the thorough-going way in which they urged the utter oneness of the divine essence. It is interesting to note that though they urged this doctrine against trinitarian notions, Christian theology usually accepts the identity of the essential attributes with the essence.<sup>3</sup> The way the Mu'tazilites approached the problem was thus. If God was a Knower, then He must have knowledge. This knowledge would either be in Him or outside Him. If the latter were the case then knowledge would be something additional added to God, and the essential God would need to depend on something outside Himself for His knowledge. If this is the case, then God cannot be considered to be self-sufficient or absolute. Moreover, duality has been introduced into the divine nature. It is therefore felt that no other way out of the dilemma is possible than to confess that God's knowledge is identical with His essence. Beyond this there is no attempt to investigate the mode of the inherence of the divine attributes in the essence or to define their relation to it precisely and positively, for it was held that no positive description could be given of God's qualities and so only negative explanations were entertained. Thus, if it was said that God knew, this only meant that He was not ignorant. This in general was the method employed by Mu'tazilites with regard to all the attributes. They were strong opponents of the eternal word because they considered that this violated the divine unity. It has been suggested that the peculiar form of the names of God in the Qur'an with the definite article, e.g., *the Knower*, *the Living*, may have

<sup>1</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. VIII (P.G., 94, 808 f.).

<sup>2</sup> I.e., *ahl ut tauhid*.

<sup>3</sup> Aquinas : *Contra Gentiles*, I, Capp. XXII, XLV, LXXIII, etc.

led the Mu'tazilites to apprehend a danger of these separate names being regarded by the ignorant as separate individuals and thus providing a regular pantheon. This must not be dismissed as improbable. To a people not far from paganism it might have been possible, and there can be no doubt of the great dread which the intellectuals manifested of falling back into polytheism or any other view but monotheism. Both Christians and Muslims alike should remember that it is this dread which lies at the bottom of objections to the doctrine of the Trinity, the former because it should lead them to a more sympathetic attitude to the Muslim in this difficulty and to greater zeal in guarding the doctrine from any statement which could be understood as tritheism, and the latter because the doctrine of the Trinity is not polytheistic at all.

To sum up, the Mu'tazilites sought to guard the divine unity by a denial of separate attributes. God has no particular knowledge, power or life by which He knows and exercises power and lives. Whatever in us seems to result from the possession of some quality, is in God from and by His essence and has no real distinction from God Himself. When we say that God is Omniscient or Omnipotent or that He is the Living God, though we were to multiply such predicates *ad infinitum* we should only assert that God is. This is the teaching of Abū Hudhayl, one of the great Mu'tazilites. He maintained that God's qualities must be either negations or logical references or relations. Nothing positive could be said of Him, because then there would be the composition of subject and predicate, of being and quality, in God and God is not composite but absolutely simple. As we proceed it will be seen how closely such views approximate to earlier theological formulations.

Pseudo-Dionysius provides us with some illustrations of the way in which it was conceived that attributes should be related to the undifferentiated Godhead and not to hypostases which seems to have been the main concern of the Mu'tazilites, e.g., "All the names proper to God are always applied in Scripture not partially but to the whole, entire, full, complete Godhead, and they all refer indivisibly, absolutely, unreservedly, and wholly to all the wholeness of the whole and entire Godhead."<sup>1</sup>

### (III) THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

The proper foundation for the discussion of the attributes of God as held in Islam should be the epithets which are applied to Him by Muhammad in the Qur'ān. These "ninety-nine" names,<sup>2</sup> however, give place at a very early date to certain attributes (*sifāt*) which in some cases seem to be reduced to the bare minimum. e.g., the know-

<sup>1</sup> *Divine Names*, Cap. II, i.

<sup>2</sup> For a list of these, see the end of Vol. I of this work.

ledge, power and life of the Mu'tazilites occupy the centre of attention. We have the postulate of seven attributes (*haft sifāt*), life, knowledge, power, will, hearing, seeing, and speech; or we have the ten principles, namely that God is powerful, knowing, living, willing, seeing and hearing, speaking, that the speech of God is eternal, that His knowledge is eternal, that His will is eternal and, finally, that He knows by knowledge, lives by life, exercises power by power, wills by will, speaks by speech, hears by hearing and sees by sight.<sup>1</sup> The *sifāt* become creedal while the Quranic names are used in ritual recitation. But this is to anticipate, and in this early period we have to content ourselves with observing some of the connexions between the gradually forming doctrine of the attributes and the early pre-Islamic theology.

There were in these early days various opinions as to the names which it was proper to apply to God. Baghdādī<sup>2</sup> informs us that Hishām b. 'Amr al Fawāti did not like to use the name *Al Wakīl* for God, although he read it in the Qur'ān. Some difficulty was early felt about the naming of God by names which referred to acts which occurred in time. How could God be said to be eternally qualified by such names? Thus Ibn Karrām (d. c. A.D. 870) held that God has been eternally qualified by names derived from His acts although the eternal existence of acts is absurd.<sup>3</sup> He is eternally creator, sustainer and benefactor even without the existence of acts of creation, etc. He is said to be eternally creator by "creatingness" (*khāliqīya*) and sustainer by "sustainingness" (*rāziqīya*). These two are power to create and power to provide respectively. The power is eternal though the act has a definite temporal beginning. Such abstractions have an appearance of philosophizing and so were probably popular, but they have far less real value than the concrete and direct epithets of the Qur'ān. Al Jubbā'i held<sup>4</sup> that it was possible to devise names for Allah derived from the acts which He does. Al Ash'arī in debate with him remarked that in this case Allah should be called the producer of pregnancy, but even Christians had not ventured to say that He produced the pregnancy of Mary. The Quranic epithets included many which could be regarded as contraries, e.g., God is described as the one who leads and the one who misleads. There is an echo of this in what Baghdādī says about the Khāzimites<sup>5</sup> who predicate contrary attributes of Allah, i.e., both friendship and enmity, averring that He does not cease hating His enemies and loving His friends. As already seen, the Qadarites and Mu'tazilites denied eternal attributes to Allah. They seem not to have hesitated to deny what could be regarded as the plain sense of the Qur'ān. "Allah does not see nor does anyone see

<sup>1</sup> Ghazzālī: *Iḥyā 'Ulūm id Dīn*, Vol. I, 70 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Al Farq bain al Firaq*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Baghdādī: *Al Farq bain al Firaq*, Pt. III, Cap. vii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. III, Cap. ii.

Him.”<sup>1</sup> ‘Ali Zarāra b. A‘yān said that Allah did not know, live, exercise power, hear, see, nor wish till He created for Himself life, power, etc., and the Qadarites of Basra inferred from this that His will and His word are finite. The Karrāmites also held that God’s word, will, and cognitions<sup>2</sup> were all finite. In his *Ibāna*<sup>3</sup> Al Ash‘arī asserts that Jahm denied that God was eternally knowing, willing and living. So there can be temporal things in God. What does all this mean? Why on the one hand deny the eternal attributes of God and then accept temporal attributes in Him?

A completely satisfactory reply is difficult to find, but some sort of inkling may be gathered if we look at some of the theories which had been advanced earlier with regard to the attributes. It should first of all be borne in mind that the problem of the attributes as it comes before us in the early formative period of Muslim theology is the counterpart in Islam of the problem of the personal distinctions in the Godhead on the Christian side.

The idea of God which had been already formed in the philosophical theology was of one who was in all respects immutable. Thus in Philo we find God represented as immutable,<sup>4</sup> having no needs,<sup>5</sup> impassible,<sup>6</sup> inexpressible by images or language<sup>7</sup> (cf. Sura xl. 19). He is without qualities<sup>8</sup> and simply pure being. He is self-dependent and beyond all relations. Yet Philo speaks of the Providence of God. Here we have the paradox which renders the task of elucidation so difficult. The parallel to the Mu‘tazilite view will be obvious.

When Philo made his assertion that God was without qualities it was because that which possessed qualities could not be considered to be *sui generis*.<sup>9</sup> It must share such qualities with others. Something of this thought seems to be behind what is said by the Mu‘tazilites. If God is said to have knowledge it is a quality which, if it exists apart from His Essence, may be attributed to others, and so God would cease to be *sui generis*. Thus to predicate qualities of God is to be in danger of *tashbīh*, i.e., likening God to creatures. But the dilemma is that the Qur‘ān does apply epithets to God. The only solution therefore is to remove these from the essential nature of God and class them with other attributes, holding in mind that these have no effect on the immutable essence. It should be noted that Philo enlarges his view to say that properties (*iδιώτητες*) which are peculiar to God may be predicated of Him because they do no injury to His uniqueness, and so He

<sup>1</sup> *Baqhdādī: Al Farg bain al Firaq*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. III, Cap. vi.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 54–55.

<sup>4</sup> *Leg. All.*, II, 9 (I, 72) and *Cherub.* 6 (I, 142).

<sup>5</sup> *Quod Deus Immut.*, 12 (I, 281).

<sup>6</sup> *Abr.*, 36 (II, 29).

<sup>7</sup> *Mutat. Nom.*, 2 (I, 580).

<sup>8</sup> *Leg. All.*, I, 13 (I, 50).

<sup>9</sup> *Agr. Noe*, 3 (I, 302).

can be described as self-existent, eternally omnipotent, omniscient, perfect because these properties can belong to no one but Himself.

Thus any attributes which are predicated of God which admit in any sense the classing of God with creatures or the sharing of God with the attributes of creatures are to be utterly rejected. It follows logically from this statement that all such attributes as may be in God cannot be other than His essence because they have no reference to anything else whatever. But still there remains the text of scripture. Philo has it before him and has to accommodate his theories to that. What a similar situation to that with which the Mu'tazilites were confronted! Here is an anthropomorphic scripture and a philosophizing interpretation. Was it not inevitable that both should take the same way in their explanations? How explain a God who is not subject to the change and fluctuations which would mar His immutability and who yet is a revealer, a creator, a providence? And this was not a problem which agitated only the Mu'tazilites. Al Ash'ari says<sup>1</sup> that some of the Murjites also adopted their views, in particular 'Abdullah b. Kullāb. But the Karrāmites preferred the anthropomorphic alternative.

From what we have said we can understand better the extraordinary criticism of the Mu'tazilites by Baghdādī when he says that they believe the attributes of Allah do not belong to Allah alone. What he means is that those attributes which the orthodox would ascribe to Allah, the Mu'tazilites believe are common to Him and to creatures, i.e., Allah sees and so do creatures, etc. What the Mu'tazilites really said was that certain attributes could not be ascribed to the divine essence because they were applicable to creatures. Not that this gets them out of their great difficulty, but it shows that what they sought to express was that whatever was not *sui generis* could not be applied to God. The form which the doctrine took in the compromise of Al Ash'ari was the principle of *mukhālafa*, God's difference from all created things.

The distinction of the attributes of God in His essence from what may be attributed to creatures appears in Theodore of Mopsuestia.<sup>2</sup> "He is not circumscribed by the requirements (or limitations) of (human) nature, nor is He subordinate to the order of (worldly) knowledge, because goodness, justice, power and wisdom are (essentially) His. . . . Since He is above all the imperfections and higher than the intelligence of every created thing, a made man cannot define His Maker, nor is a creature able to confine its Creator within the limits of its knowledge. In proportion as His nature is above all beginning, His definition is beyond the capacity of a creature with a beginning."

Before passing from the subject of the identification of the divine attributes with the essence, it is interesting to see how the orthodox

<sup>1</sup> *Magālāt*, I, 154.

<sup>2</sup> Mingana: *Synopsis of Christian Doctrine*, p. 6.

combatted the statements to that effect, e.g., when Baghdādī<sup>1</sup> speaks of Abū Hudhayl's heresies he says that one of them is that Allah is not only Himself but His knowledge is Himself and His power is Himself. Baghdādī replies that this would mean that Allah is Himself knowledge and power. But if He is knowledge and power it is not possible that He should be knowing and powerful, because knowledge cannot be knowing and power cannot be powerful. The plain meaning of this hair-splitting is that power and knowledge cannot be accidentally ascribed to power and knowledge because power is power and knowledge is knowledge *per se*, otherwise there is no sense in the objection.

An instance of the sensitiveness of the early Muslim theologians in respect to anything which would seem to indicate a differentiation within the Godhead comparable with the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is to be found in the theory which Baghdādī describes as the sixth heresy of Mu'ammār.<sup>2</sup> This is his denial that Allah knows Himself because he considers it is necessary for that which is known to be distinct from that which knows. We have already come across a similar idea in the argument of Timothy with the Caliph Mahdi. Strictly speaking the doctrine of the Holy Trinity falls to be considered in another connexion, but here it may be said that interpretations of the Trinity which regarded the Persons as hypostasized qualities were not infrequent. Even certain phrases of the Damascene might convey this idea. "The Son is only the power of the Father which preceded the creation of the universe. . . . The Holy Spirit is the holy power of the Father which renders manifest the hidden side of the Godhead." Reference should also be made to the arguments of Eliyya of Nisibis to be found in translation in Browne's *Eclipse of Christianity in Asia*. Thus he says "There is no difference between our saying 'one nature—three persons', and our saying 'Self-existent possessor of Life and Wisdom'."<sup>3</sup> It is on account of such statements as these that we find Shahrastānī saying in regard to Abū Hudhayl's opinion on the attributes —namely, that they are modes of the essence—that this is to be compared with the persons of the Trinity in Christian thought.<sup>4</sup>

We can understand something of the perplexity that was felt on the question of the eternity of such attributes as referred to God's creating or His seeing or knowing the particulars of present temporal existence, or willing the particulars which happen in time, when we remember that Origen felt the difficulty of speaking of God as the Creator without coming to the conclusion that creation was eternal. One of the items of the creed which emerged from these early discussions of the attributes in Islam was that God was eternally Creator. This was accompanied

<sup>1</sup> Baghdādī: *Farq.*, Pt. III, Cap. iii. See also Al Ash'arī: *Maqālāt*, I, 157 ff., and on Abū Hudhayl, particularly I, 165.

<sup>2</sup> Baghdādī: *Farq.*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Cheikh: *Vingt Traité*, 126.

<sup>4</sup> *Al Milal wa'n Nihāl*, p. 34 f. (ed. Cureton).

by a belief in a creation which coincided with time. Origen felt that Creation and Creator were correlatives. We could not suppose that there had been a change in God from potentiality to actuality. Origen also comes to the conclusion that Creation and Time are coincident; they come to be simultaneously. Later a distinction was made between essential and agentive attributes which is traceable through the long ranges of the later theology both Muslim and Christian. Some hint of that distinction is to be found in Pseudo-Dionysius.<sup>1</sup> There the terms are as follows: "Absolute Being, Absolute Life, Absolute Godhead are titles which in an Originating Divine and Causal sense we apply to the One Transcendent Origin and Cause of all things, but we also apply the same terms in a secondary sense to providential manifestations of power derived from the unparticipated God, i.e., to the infusion of Absolute Being, Absolute Life and Absolute Godhead, which so transmutes the creatures wherein each according to its nature participates, that these acquire the attributes and names 'existent, living, and divinely possessed'." This is the "systole and diastole" we have had occasion to notice before, and it has its correspondences in systems which widely diverge from Neoplatonism.

#### (IV) ANTHROPOMORPHISM

The Qur'an contains the type of anthropomorphism which is to be found also in the Bible. God is seated on the throne in heaven. He possesses eyes,<sup>2</sup> hands<sup>3</sup> and face.<sup>4</sup> Anthropopathisms are also to be found. God is the great repenter or the one whose métier it is to relent (*tawwāb*);<sup>5</sup> He hates (Sura xl. 10 and 37, etc.) and is wrathful.<sup>6</sup> In many passages God is spoken of as "settled" on the throne.<sup>7</sup> Various interpretations were made of these and some even went the length of denying the expressions in some sort. Thus we are informed that the *Jahmites* denied that God had a face. Bayān b. Sam'ān at Tamīm explained the verse which says that everything will perish save the face of Allah, as meaning that every deed on which God's face does not look with approval will be annihilated.<sup>8</sup> Ibn Hazm, in his heresiology, interprets "face" as "essence".<sup>9</sup> The anthropomorphists took the Throne, the hands, the eyes, the face and the "sitting" all in a literal sense, and the Mu'tazilites resorted to the use of rational interpretation treating these things as allegorical or metaphorical (*ta'wil*). This is

<sup>1</sup> *Divine Names*, Cap. xi, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Suras xi. 39, xxxii. 27, xx. 39 ff., lxi. 48, liv. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Suras v. 69, xxxii. 90, xxxvi. 83, xlvi. 10, lxvii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Suras ii. 109, 274, iv. 27, vi. 52, xiii. 22, xviii. 27, xxviii. 88, xxx. 37.

<sup>5</sup> Suras ii. 155, ix. 118-19.

<sup>6</sup> Suras iv. 95, xlvi. 6, lviii. 15, xx. 83, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Suras ii. 27, vii. 52, x. 3, xiii. 2, xx. 4, xxv. 60, xxxii. 3, lvii. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Baghdādī: *Al Fārg bain al Firaq*, Pt. IV, Cap. ii.

<sup>9</sup> *Al Fīsal* (Section on the Shi'ites), I, 61.

parallel to the allegorization or rationalization of Biblical expressions found in the early exegetes. Lane quotes Ar Rāghib's interpretation of Sura xx. 4 on the "sitting" on the Throne. "The Compassionate hath ascendancy over the empyrean so as to have everything in the universe within His grasp." All four of the great Imāms, Abū Hanīfa, Ash Shāfi'i, Ibn Ḥanbal and Mālik b. Anas, agreed that the discussion of the anthropomorphisms of the Qur'ān was unlawful. Ibn Ḥanbal declared that "Whoever moves his hand when he reads in the Qur'ān (at Sura xxxviii. 75) the words, 'I have created with my hands' ought to have his hand cut off; and whoever stretches out his finger when repeating the words of Muhammad, 'The heart of the believer is between the two fingers of the Merciful', deserves to have his finger cut off."<sup>1</sup> The discussion between Ibn Ḥanbal and Jahm which we find in the former's work called *Ar Raddu'ala Zanādiqa wa'l Jahmiya*, reveals some of the matters of debate. Jahm denied the vision of God, that God spoke with Moses, that He sits on the Throne and that He is in a particular place. Ibn Ḥanbal says that this would mean that one would have to say that God was in unclean places and in pigs. At the same time the passages in the Qur'ān where Allah is said to be with men, e.g., "There cannot be private conversation of three but He makes a fourth . . . but that He is with them wherever they be" (Sura lviii. 8)<sup>2</sup> have to be explained allegorically by Ibn Ḥanbal himself.

The question which agitated the minds of these early thinkers was what principle should be adopted when seeking an explanation of the text of the Qur'ān. Should it be *naql* which is simple quotation, or should it be *'aql*, i.e., rational? Tirmidhī when commenting on the verses where it is said that God descends to the lowest of the seven heavens says, "The descent is intelligible though the mode is not known; the belief in it is obligatory and debate about it is culpable heresy." Ibn Ḥanbal on the whole repudiates the principle of rational or allegorical interpretation (*ta'wīl*) as risky. In some cases he urged that it was utterly impossible to give an explanation, e.g., in regard to most of those expressions in which God's acts or attributes are likened to those of creatures. In support of this he advances the verses which declare that God is unlike man, e.g., Suras cxii. 4 and xlvi. 9, etc. But Ibn Hazm is not satisfied that even Ibn Ḥanbal has escaped the danger of anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*).<sup>3</sup> At the same time Ibn Hazm attacks the *ta'wīl* which the Mu'tazilites employed. The would-be orthodox did not like either *tashbīh* or *ta'wīl*, the former because it assumed too much likeness and the latter because it threatened to empty of all significance the expressions of the Qur'ān with reference to the divine

<sup>1</sup> Shahrastānī: *Al Milal wa'n Nihāl* (Cureton), p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also Suras ix. 40 and xx. 48, etc.  
*Al Fiqh*, II, 166.

attributes, and nominally this was the position of Ibn Hanbal. But the range of possibility was so great that when different explanations were advanced it was always possible for an opponent to bring the charge of deviating towards one of these two extremes, and so Ibn Hanbal does not escape the charge. Jahm even goes so far as to accuse Ibn Hanbal of hypostasizing in the manner of the Christians, i.e., he accuses him of the corporealizing heresy (*tajsim*). Jahm himself was the exponent of *ta'yl* and for this reason some writers on the heresies call him a Mu'tazilite, but we have evidence that they disowned him.<sup>1</sup>

It was probably on account of the multitude of explanations offered by different thinkers that at last the orthodox defence was directed against any further extension of the debate. They used Sura iii. 5 as their argument against the use of reason in divinity. The trouble was that with a slight alteration in the punctuation, the verse could be made to mean the exact opposite. The orthodox version was "None knoweth the interpretation thereof save Allah, and the stable in knowledge say, 'We believe in it'." The opponents stated it thus, "None knoweth the interpretation thereof save Allah and the stable in knowledge. They say, 'We believe in it'." It was further asserted that all verses which referred to attributes were ambiguous (*mutashābih*) and finally the anthropomorphisms of the Qur'an were to be accepted *bilā kayf wa lā tashbīh*, without attributing a quality and without making any comparison. It must not be supposed, however, that this settled the matter once and for all. We can still find the extreme anthropomorphist or even corporealists alongside such militant opposition to anthropomorphism that it is reported that Abū Hudhayl considered it legitimate to put anthropomorphists to death.<sup>2</sup> Contrast this attitude with what Al Ash'arī states about Hishām b. al Hakam. This man described Allah's body as "circumscribed, possessing breadth and length and height, of equal dimensions, radiating with light, having a fixed measure in its three dimensions, in a place beyond place, like a bar of pure metal shining as a round pearl on all sides, having colour, taste, scent and feel, in such a manner that its colour is its taste, its scent and its feel, absolute colour which does not admit any other colour, and that (this body) moves or is at rest, stands and sits down".<sup>3</sup> But even when he speaks in these physical terms he is at pains to explain that such a body is not like any human body. Gradually this sensitiveness to *tashbīh* has extended in Islam and though the Qur'an states categorically that Allah is the most merciful of those who show mercy (Sura xii. 64, etc.) and this certainly institutes a comparison, it is stoutly maintained that the human quality of mercy cannot be regarded as a clue to the mercy which is the attribute of Allah. When

<sup>1</sup> *Kitāb ul Intisār*, 133.

<sup>2</sup> Baghdādi : *Al Farg bain al Firaq*, Pt. III, Cap. ii.

<sup>3</sup> *Maqālāt*, I, 197.

we consider the crudity of some of the debates recorded, it is perhaps easier understood why the doctrine has been pushed to the other extreme. Consider, for instance, what Baghdādi says about Ibn Karrām and his adherents. Here we have a debate as to whether Allah is as big as His throne, whether it is equal to His breadth, and the crude statement that He is no larger than His throne on the side where He touches it, and no part of Him overlaps it. There were others who said that the throne is a place for Him, and if He created many thrones side by side of the present one and they were all equal, all of them would become a place for Him, for He is greater than them all.<sup>1</sup> Or take what the same writer<sup>2</sup> records of Mughira b. Sa'īd al-'Ijli.<sup>3</sup> This man said the limbs of Allah were formed in the shape of the letters of the alphabet, the *alif* being His leg, the *'ayn* His eye and the *hā'* another organ. We have also other indications of the crudity of the conceptions which were formed, when, for instance, we see that it was debated whether it was Allah or His throne which was borne according to Sura lxix. 17. This is recorded in the name of Yūnus b. 'Abd ur Rahmān al Qummi.<sup>4</sup>

These anthropomorphisms recall the anthropomorphisms which were current among the Rabbis.<sup>5</sup> There is a similar preoccupation with questions concerning the throne of God. The Throne has the image of Jacob carved on it;<sup>6</sup> God has a court;<sup>7</sup> He is engaged in the study of the *Torah* and the rest of the Old Testament by day and the *Mishna* by night.<sup>8</sup> He prays to Himself that His mercy may overcome His wrath (cf. Sura xxxiii. 56 which states that Allah prays).<sup>9</sup> These anthropomorphisms are comparatively late and seem to be reactionary. They certainly mark a big declension from the sensitiveness of the LXX and the positive opposition of Philo. The *Targums* also frequently use paraphrases to avoid anthropomorphist expressions. This is particularly noticeable in reference to the Targumic use of *memra* to prevent the direct attribution of acts to God. Thus Onkelos has for "I am thy shield" in Gen. xv. 1, "My *memra* shall be thy strength", and in Gen. xvii. 7, "the covenant between my Word and thee". The words of the serpent to Eve, "Ye shall be as God" are also modified by Onkelos to "Ye shall be as the great ones". Ben Uzziel, however, is not so sensitive to the evil of anthropomorphisms, and we find in him, when the creation of man in the image of God is mentioned, "In the image of the Lord He created him with 248

<sup>1</sup> *Farg.*, Pt. III, Cap. vii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. IV, Cap. iii.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide Dhahabi*: *Mizān ul I'tidāl*, III, 191.

<sup>4</sup> *Farg.*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>5</sup> See art. *ERE*, Vol. VI, 295-96, God (Jewish) by A. E. Suffrin.

<sup>6</sup> *Targ. Jon.*, Gen. xxviii. 12.

<sup>7</sup> *Jerus. Berachoth*, ix. 5.

<sup>8</sup> *Targ. Canticles*, v. 10

<sup>9</sup> *Berachoth*, 7.

members and with 365 nerves and overlaid them with skin and filled it with flesh and blood." Thus we see in the Rabbinical schools evidence of difference of opinion with regard to the propriety of anthropomorphic expressions about God. Philo in general follows the lead of the translators of the *Septuagint*. Thus, e.g., we find that the "repentance of God" finds no place in the LXX at Gen. vi. 6, and Philo speaks of the impiety of saying that it repented God that He had made man because God is not as a man. He sees and is not seen, just as the soul sees and is not seen.<sup>1</sup> He warns his readers that names are only symbols of created things: "Seek them not for the Uncreated." He even declares that "God" and "Lord" are used simply as metaphors. His attitude to the anthropomorphisms, which he could not overlook in his reading of the Old Testament, was that these were there simply as "accommodations" to the inferior intelligence. He denies that God feels anger or jealousy or any such thing. He is incorporeal and invisible.

A subtler form of anthropomorphism is shown by certain statements of the beliefs of heretics in the early days. Thus there were some who seemed to deny the immutability of God by saying that there were things which came to be in Him. The Karrāmites, e.g., said that His utterance, His will, His visual and auditory perceptions, and His being qualified with the results of acts which took place in time, were all accidents inhering in Him. God Himself is described by them as substance (*jawhar*), and these other things come to inhere in Him and become inseparable from Him. He was in the first place without them and now they have accrued to Him.<sup>2</sup> The same sort of thing is said about God's cognitions implying that the succession of thought to thought, and of item of knowledge to item of knowledge, or discursive reasoning, is to be attributed to God. This is behind the accusation made by Al Ash'arī against Jahm<sup>3</sup> that he denied that God was eternal, knowing, living, willing, etc.

There also seem to have been similar difficulties with regard to theomorphism, i.e., the divine image in man. Indeed the two seem to be correlative. If God's will is likened to a human will there is not much difference between that and saying that the human will is like the divine. Yet there really is a difference. One can say that a statue is in the similitude of a man, but to say that a man is in the similitude of a statue is facetious.

It is strange to find that it is the sect of the Mu'tazilites which is accused of saying that God has a will like a human will, i.e., of the same genus.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps we ought not to be so surprised at this when we

<sup>1</sup> *Quod Deus Immutabilis*, 5 (I, 275 f.).

<sup>2</sup> *Baghdādī*: *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. vii.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibana*, 54 f. Cf. also *Baghdādī*, *op. cit.*, Pt. III, Cap. vi.

<sup>4</sup> *Baghdādī*: *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. viii.

remember that they asserted that the word of God was created. This, too, was regarded as "likening the word of God to the word of creatures", saying that it consisted of sounds and letters in exactly the same way as human speech. It is possible that in the heresiologies we have an unintentional caricature of what was really thought on this matter. It may simply be that in defence of divine reason some of the early philosophizing teachers held that there was an affinity in the psychical realm between God and man while there was none in the corporeal. Take, e.g., the statements of Baghdādī about Mu'amar.<sup>1</sup> He accuses Mu'amar of ascribing to man acts which are properly only to be ascribed to Allah, saying that man is living, knowing, able to exercise power, and wise; i.e., the very things on which Christian theologians insist as showing that man had been created in the image of God. Baghdādī goes on, "He denies that man can move or be at rest, or be hot or cold, wet or dry, possess colour, weight, taste or smell". This was presumably because Mu'amar held the essentially spiritual nature of man, and would argue that the essential man could be none of these things though his body might be. Baghdādī says that Allah is also free from all these things. Mu'amar also said that man when in the body is the director or governor of the body but is not there in the sense of being contained in it, just as Allah is in every place in the sense that he governs or orders it and knows what is occurring in it, but not in the sense of being present in it or contained in it physically. It would appear from this that the spiritual nature of man—and therefore theomorphism—is classed with the heresies. Al Ghazzālī is almost alone in unambiguous declaration that man is spiritual substance (*jawhar rūhānī*), and he also presses the tradition that God made Adam in the image of Rahmān.

Referring back to the Christian discussion of the incorporeality of God we find that when this is examined by Origen he is careful to state that when Light, or Fire or Spirit are used of God these do not imply to God anything of a corporeal nature. It is interesting to see that even when Spirit is in question, the possibility of anthropomorphism is not absent from the mind of the theologian. This is partly due to the fact that there was often a semi-material view of spirit. This idea still lingers in Muslim thought. Even in Ghazzālī we find the spirit described in semi-material terms. It is a humour, a subtle body (*latīfa*) which flows in the body. It will be at once seen that when the anthropomorphic view is set in relation to an *anthropos* defectively conceived, the abhorrence of such anthropomorphism will be correspondingly intensified. There is much more ground for the rejection of all anthropomorphism, psychical as well as physical, when the conception of humanity is defective. It must not be thought that this semi-materialistic view of the human spirit is peculiar to Islam. It is to be found

<sup>1</sup> Baghdādī: *Farg.*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

in Christian theologians too. Thus Duns Scotus held that there was only one incorporeal, i.e., God. Man's spirit is not incorporeal. The earlier theologians also have often the same idea. Thus we have the same materialistic idea of the soul in Tertullian's *De Anima*. Nothing exists which is incorporeal soul, but the soul is only a refined species of matter and soul is created with body. Take also what Philo has to say.<sup>1</sup> The spirit is the substance of the soul and blood is the soul of the flesh. Even mind (*nous*) which is superior to soul, is earthy and corruptible.<sup>2</sup> Spirit is often merely breath circulating through the body by means of veins and arteries. It is true that sometimes he declares the soul to be incorporeal,<sup>3</sup> and this he holds under the influence of that same potent conception of the creation in the divine image and the inbreathing of God. Philosophically he seems to show some scepticism and yet cannot escape from the statement in Genesis when it comes to the point.

The reluctance in bringing God down to the level of man is also experienced in bringing man up to the level of God, and sometimes this results in strange doctrines. Thus Ka'bī<sup>4</sup> and Nazzām are said to have believed that Allah had no will and that when it was said that Allah *wills* it only meant that Allah *does*. This, so far as Ka'bī was concerned, was an extension of his idea that Allah does not *see* Himself nor anyone else, but only *knows* Himself and others. Passing on from the denial of sense perceptions to Allah he went on to deny will.<sup>5</sup> Will, according to him, is used only metaphorically of God.

On the general question one might argue that a certain measure of anthropomorphism is inescapable. When we turn to the Quranic source with the ideas of the theologians in mind we can see two extremes meeting. There is first the plain anthropomorphic conception of God at any rate as far as the language goes. This results in some measure of belief in an intensely concrete individual and in a personal God. But even those who accepted the Quranic text were in danger by their resistance to rational explanation or their refusal to discuss the matter at all of precisely that negative view of which they were not slow to accuse the philosopher or the Mu'tazilite. If "without asking why" results in the negation of all that is human, Ibn Hanbal is in as great danger from abstraction and thrusting God back into unrevealed obscurity as any one else. It is true that within the ranks of the adherents of *naql* there may be found a very wide range of belief from the crudest anthropomorphism, through the analogical, and the application of the principle *in sensu eminentiori*, to the denial of any possibility of knowledge of the Absolute. Crudest literalism

<sup>1</sup> *Quaest. et Sol. in Gen.* (II, 59), *Mundi Op.*, 22 (I, 15), *Ebriet*, 27 (I, 373).

<sup>2</sup> *Leg. All.*, I, 12 (I, 49 f.).

<sup>3</sup> *Somn.*, I, 6 (I, 625).

<sup>4</sup> His full name Abū Qāsim 'Abdullāh b. Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd ul Banāḥī.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Bağhdādi* : *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

like that of Abū ‘Āmir slapping his leg and saying “A real leg like this” when reading Sura lxviii. 42 is patently false and hardly merits refutation, but, on the other hand, the principle of *mukhālafa* to which the majority adhere might negative revelation. This principle is that all that is said of God is said with a difference and it has become proverbial that nothing the mind can devise can convey anything about Allah. Officially both *tashbīh* and *ta’īl*, i.e., anthropomorphism and divesting, are heretical; but Islam, while it adopts the middle way of *tanzīh*, which is equivalent to the ascription of qualities to God *in sensu eminentiori*, is on the whole inclined to *ta’īl*. The reason is the Quranic emphasis on the uniqueness of God and the denial of any affinity between God and man. The *tashbīh* which is condemned is, of course, not the *tashbīh* of the Qur’ān. The very postulation of a revelation such as the Qur’ān, necessitates a certain anthropomorphic element. The purification from idols which Jews and intellectual pagans had achieved would, of course, naturally lead to a suspicion of anthropomorphism. The Arabs stood at no very great distance from their days of idolatry and those who clung most to the new proclamation of the Qur’ān would be most likely to resist anything which suggested that God could be represented in the form of a creature. Nevertheless it must be repeated that the method of revelation demands some measure of anthropomorphism. However we abstract, we can never abstract sufficiently while we think as human beings and in human terms.

Thus we may say that both anthropomorphism and anthropopathism present a problem for Christian, Jew and Muslim. The statements in the different writers are similar. John of Damascus says<sup>1</sup> “Many of the things relating to God, therefore, that are dimly understood, cannot be put into fitting terms, but on things above us we cannot do other than express ourselves according to our limited capacity; as, for instance, when we speak of God we use the terms ‘sleep’, and ‘wrath’, and ‘regardlessness’, ‘hands’ and ‘feet’, and such like expressions.” And in another place,<sup>2</sup> “It is impossible for us men . . . to understand or speak of the divine and lofty and immaterial energies of the Godhead except by the use of images, types and symbols derived from our own life.” . . . “By God’s eyes, eyelids and sight we are to understand his power of overseeing all things and His knowledge which nothing can escape. . . . By God’s ears and hearing is meant His readiness to be propitiated and to receive our petitions. . . . God’s mouth and speech are His means of indicating His will. . . . God’s countenance is the demonstration and manifestation of Himself through His works: for our manifestation is through the countenance. . . . God’s hands mean the effectual nature of His

<sup>1</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. II (P.G., 94, 792).  
<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. I, Cap. XI (P.G., 94, 842).

energy." It is also interesting to find the principle of *nayl* accepted by John of Damascus.<sup>1</sup> He says, "It is not in our capacity, therefore, to say anything about God or even to think of Him, beyond the things which have been divinely revealed to us whether by word or manifestation, by the divine oracles of the Old Testament or the New." Sometimes it is suggested that the analogical method is the best as, for instance, in Philo when he says that from the fact that we have an invisible mind we apprehend that there is an invisible mind of the universe.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the "stripping" of the Mu'tazilites is advocated as, for instance, in the consideration of God as beyond classification and unique, the *ārōos* of the Alexandrians and the *lā thānī* of the Muslim. Parallels in the solutions offered in the three faiths might be multiplied.

In judging the question of anthropomorphisms it must not be forgotten that there are such which imply nothing at all derogatory to the divine Majesty. They are, as it were, accidental. This is pointed out by Strothmann.<sup>3</sup> The passages in which the expressions occur are representative of an intimate devotional spirit. They are poetical expressions rather than to be taken in literalist philosophical fashion. Thus we have in the prophets of Israel, "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people" (Isa. lxv. 2). No one would consider that this was intended to teach that God had hands. It would be sheer perversity to suggest it. Similarly when we read in a tradition of Islam that God descends every night into the lower heavens to receive the prayers of men, crying, "Is there any suppliant?", we should not hastily judge this as crude anthropomorphism but rather remember the religious spirit and the idea of God as ready to listen to men which prompted the words. It is wrong to judge one set of religious expressions adversely just because they do not happen to be our own and to cherish similar expressions because they have been of importance to us in our religious life. Many adopted anthropomorphic expressions to avoid negation, i.e., *ibṭāl*, and to maintain affirmation, i.e., *iṭḥbāt*. Even when Hishām b. al Hakam uses the term "body" of God it is with the desire to affirm. Pseudo-Dionysius would be the last person we should expect to have anything to say for the expression of similitude between God and man, but we find that he says, "If God be called 'similar' . . . we must not repudiate this. For the sacred writers tell us that the All-transcendent God is in Himself unlike any being, but that He nevertheless bestows a Divine Similitude on those that turn to Him. . . . It is the power of the Divine Similitude which turns all creatures towards their cause. . . . We must not say that God resembles (creatures) any more than we should say that a

<sup>1</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. II (*P.G.*, 94, 793).

<sup>2</sup> *De Mundi Opif.*, 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Encycl. of Islam*, art. *Tashbīh*.

man resembles his own portrait. . . . For the same things are both like unto God and unlike Him. They are like Him in so far as they are able to imitate Him that is beyond imitation, unlike Him in so far as effects fall short of their cause and are infinitely and incomparably inferior.”<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the rejection of the corporeality of God is essential. Until we have seen our way through a philosophy in which there is a spiritual explanation of the material we must retain our rejection of a material explanation of the spiritual. The theologians are therefore, for the most part, definitely opposed to any idea that God is a body and this the Muslim theologians would extend to a rejection of the incarnation, which they would classify as a kind of *tajṣīm*, i.e., the attributing of a body to God. As an example of the Christian resistance to the idea that God has a body we quote the Damascene.<sup>2</sup> “It is evident that He is incorporeal. For how could that possess body which is infinite, boundless, formless, intangible and invisible, in short, simple and not compound? How could that be immutable which is circumscribed and subject to passion? . . . For combination is the beginning of conflict, conflict of separation, separation of dissolution, and dissolution is altogether foreign to God. . . . How will it be maintained that God permeates and fills the universe? It is an impossibility that one body should permeate other bodies without dividing and being divided and without being enveloped and contrasted in the same way as all fluids mix and commingle. . . . But if some say that the body is immaterial in the same way as the fifth body<sup>3</sup> of which the Greek sages speak (which body is an impossibility) it will be wholly subject to motion like the heaven,” but the *Primum Movens* is not moved.

Similarly, there is practical unanimity with regard to the denial that God is in a place, i.e., in one particular place. At the same time there was much debate as to how this should be expressed. Al Ash'ari<sup>4</sup> indicates the various alternatives suggested by the Muslim thinkers. Some said God is every place. Others said that He is in no place; while others said He is in every place. It was also said that He comprises or compasses all places and that His being is found in all places. It is interesting to compare with this what Philo says.<sup>5</sup> God is called place because He contains all things and is contained by none. “I and all others are not place but in place, for the thing contained is different from that which contains; but the divine being contained in nothing is necessarily its own place.” From this we see that Philo held that God was above space and embraced all things and was compassed

<sup>1</sup> *Divine Names*, Cap. IX, 6, 7, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. IV (*P.G.*, 94, 797).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Aristotle: *De Coelo*, i. 3 and *Meteor.*, i. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Maqālīt*, i. 202.

<sup>5</sup> *Somn.*, i. 11 (i. 630).

by nothing. In precisely the same way he conceives God to be above time. Time is the measure or dimension of created things. When God made this world He made time too. On the whole the Mu'tazilites were inclined to say that God is in no place. The earliest orthodoxy held that it was correct to say He is in heaven. The Ash'arites accepted the Mu'tazilite statement. In early times it was regarded as being heretical to say that God was uncircumscribed (*lā mahdūd*)<sup>1</sup> but this is now the orthodox expression. One of the objections offered to the doctrine of the vision of God on the Last Day was that if God were to be seen with the eye this would involve His being in a particular direction and in a place. When it was asked how God could be said to be *in* a place in any sense, i.e., not limited to a particular place but *in* it in some sense, the answer of some (notably the Mu'tazilites)<sup>2</sup> was exactly as given by John of Damascus, namely, that the Creator is in every place in the sense that He governs every place and His plan is in every place. The Damascene<sup>3</sup> says, discussing "the place of God and that Deity alone is uncircumscribed", "Bodily place is the limit by which that which is contained is contained, e.g., the air contains but the body is contained. But it is not the whole of the containing air which is the place of the body contained but the limit of the containing air, where it comes into contact with the contained body; and the reason is clearly because that which contains is not within that which it contains. . . . But there is also mental place, where mind is active, and mental and incorporeal nature exists; where mind dwells and energizes and is contained not in a bodily but in a mental fashion. For it is without form and cannot be contained as a body is. God, then, being immaterial and uncircumscribed, has not a place. For He is His own place, filling all things and being above all things and Himself maintaining all things. Yet we speak of God having place, and 'the place of God' is where His energy becomes manifest. For He penetrates everything without mixing with it, and imparts to all His energy in proportion to the fitness and receptive power of each; and by this means has a purity both natural and voluntary. For the immaterial is purer than the material and that which is virtuous than that which is linked with vice. Wherefore, by 'the place of God' is meant that which has a greater share in His energy and grace. On this account the Heaven is His Throne, for in it the angels who do His will are always glorifying Him, because this is His rest and the earth is His footstool. . . . The angel is circumscribed alike in time (for his being had a beginning) and in place (but mental place as we said before) and in apprehension, since they know somehow the nature of each other and have their bounds perfectly defined by the Creator. Bodies, in

<sup>1</sup> *Vide supra*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Al Ash'ari *Maqālāt*, i. 157.

<sup>3</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. XIII (P.G., 94, 849 f.).

short, are circumscribed both in beginning and end and in bodily place and apprehension."

Similarly, Theodore of Mopsuestia, in answer to the question why we pray towards the East, declares, "God is in height, depth, East, West, North and South; space does not circumscribe Him, nor does place confine Him. We pray in the direction of the East solely in order that our eyes may gaze in the direction of Paradise and that we may remember our first place which our first father lost by his choice." We find similar answers by Muslims when questions are asked as to why we lift up our hands or look up in prayer. In the main then we can sum up by saying that the problem of anthropomorphism is practically the same for Jew, Christian and Muslim, and that while the Christian suggests the validity of theomorphism the Muslim is inclined to reject that just as much as the other. Except certain crude minds few will accept anthropomorphism or a corporeal God or one confined in space. When we meet such views they are either the relics of primitive ideas or are caricatures of what those to whom they are attributed really held. With regard to anthropopathism the case is not quite so clear. There are some who would violently resist the idea that God is passible, as, e.g., Eunomius when he said that the ungenerate light is unapproachable and has not the power to stoop to experience affection, such a condition being proper only to the generate.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, there are those who would declare that God experiences wrath and pleasure and that He hates and loves. In these points a great deal depends on the interpretation. With regard to "psychical" similitude, not many would so depersonalise God or man as to take from either what is properly described as knowledge and will in both. The greatest danger lies in any of the religions when transcendence is over-exaggerated.

#### (v) DIVINE TRANSCENDENCE AND IMMANENCE

Transcendence may be conceived in various ways. God may be conceived as an unapproachable monarch only known by the proclamations He issues. The conception is then chiefly of dominant will. God may also be the object of a process of abstraction and the result may be a negation of all that belongs to the ordinary world of knowledge. God is thus regarded as supreme and inscrutable mind or intellect beyond the power of human mind to reach. This is metaphysical transcendence. There is also an absolutism which raises God above being as the Real and degrades all being to unreality and illusion. This is on the pattern of Brahmanic mysticism and is also represented to some extent by certain types of Neoplatonism. The transcendence is such that the individual is lost in the All who is the One.

Many writers have observed that Islam overemphasizes the transcendence of God. It will readily be understood that this applies to

<sup>1</sup> See *E.R.E.* art. by Moore, v. 575.

the orthodox schools and not to Sufism. Sufism inclines to the other extreme and sometimes is frankly pantheistic. Palgrave's description of the Bedouin's God has often been quoted. "Immeasurably and eternally exalted above, and dissimilar from, all creatures which lie levelled before Him on one common plane of instrumentality and inertness, God is one in the totality of omnipotent and omnipresent action which acknowledges no rule, standard, or limit save His own sole and absolute will. . . . He Himself, sterile in His inaccessible height, neither loving nor enjoying aught save His own and self-measured decree, without son, companion, or counsellor, is no less barren of Himself than for His creatures, and His own barrenness and lone egoism in Himself is the cause and rule of his indifferent and unregarding despotism around." There is no doubt that a primary Semitic conception of transcendence in Islam has come to be reinforced with elements which it has found congenial in other systems. We shall see that in the formulation of the theology there was little corrective at hand to modify the absolutism in the primitive strata of Islam. From this remark it should be obvious that this transcendence is not the exclusive possession of Islam. Indeed some writers have been inclined to put down the doctrine of transcendence in Islam to the influence of Greek philosophy. No doubt that had its part, but Indian influences might have been blamed with as much reason, and when we examine Christian doctrine we cannot exonerate it from certain lapses into conceptions which threatened to remove God from all relation to human life.

When in the language of devotion men say with Irenaeus that the Divine Essence is inconceivable, that our knowledge of God is relative and our language is figurative,<sup>1</sup> abasing themselves before God and realizing with humility their great limitations there is not much to object to, but when such words become the text for philosophical definitions there is danger ahead. What starts with awe and devotion ends in a negation which strikes at the roots of religion.

The School of Alexandria was specially characterized by this doctrine of transcendence. Clement says that God is one, He is unbegotten and incorruptible, possessing no form, having no needs, beyond time and space. He alone possesses real being. He is not as the Stoics consider immanent in matter. He is beyond all the characteristics of created existence, and it is an intolerable assumption to hold that there is any community of nature or affinity between God and man. In short, the process by which God is reached by man is one of abstraction and is as severe as any *ta'wil* which was ever devised in Islam. This is the process. Strip off from the idea all physical properties of bodies, divest all the dimensions. We now come to a point having position but no magnitude. This we call the Monad. Now go one step further

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Haer.*, ii, 13, 3, 4.

and remove position, which leaves the Monad alone. Even this is not enough, but we must pass beyond the One and come to the Void. That is a terrible conception. We have already noted that Philo held that God was without qualities and relations. In Plotinus there is extreme transcendence. God is beyond being, is unaffected by all external influences, without desire, without needs and without name. "Since the Nature or Hypostasis of the One is the engenderer of the All, It can Itself be none of the things in the All ; that is, It is not a thing ; It does not possess quality or quantity ; It is not an Intellectual-Principle, not a Soul ; It is not in motion and not at rest ; not in space, not in time ; It is essentially of an unique form or rather of no-form since It is prior to form as It is prior to movement and rest. All these categories hold only in the realm of existence and constitute the Multiplicity characteristic of that lower realm."<sup>1</sup> Some of Ibn Miskawaih's expressions would lead one to assume that he conceived God to be above mind. In John of Damascus also we find the declaration that God is beyond being.<sup>2</sup> "If our knowledge extends to existing things only, in what manner shall we know what surpasses being ? It is for this reason that God condescends to be called by names taken from that which we know." Gregory of Nyssa declares,<sup>3</sup> "We know that He exists but we cannot deny that we are ignorant of His essence." In Pseudo-Dionysius God transcends all qualities. In his *Mystical Theology*<sup>4</sup> he says, "When affirming the existence of that which transcends all affirmations we were obliged to start from that which is most akin to It, and then to make the affirmation on which the rest depended ; but when pursuing the negative method, to reach that which is beyond negation we must start by applying our negations to those qualities which differ most from the ultimate goal ", and in another place<sup>5</sup> he argues that He who is the pre-eminent cause of everything intelligibly perceived is not Himself any one of the things intelligibly perceived.

— What is the motive of this isolation of the Divine ? It is in order that It should not be contaminated with matter. To matter is attributed the evil that is to be found in the world. "I will say anything rather than assert that Providence is evil," says Basilides. The Jew without an idol, with the incommunicable name, tried to isolate God into a complete and utter loneliness of holy separateness. "Canst thou by searching find out God ?" "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil." This was in a sense, just as the resistance to anthropomorphism of which it is the furthest extreme, a reaction from polytheism and idolatry. Some of the impure rites of the pagan worship must have so impressed the minds of these early writers with the

<sup>1</sup> *Enneads*, VI, ix, 3, McKenna's translation.

<sup>2</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Pt. I, Cap. xii (Migne 94, 845 *Patrol. Græc.*).

<sup>3</sup> *Contra Eunomium* (*Patrol. Græc.*, 45, 933).

<sup>4</sup> Cap. III.

<sup>5</sup> Cap. V.

remnants of that paganism shown all round them as to have filled them with utter abhorrence and detestation of anything which could possibly degrade God to such a level of human filthiness and sin. This abhorrence could have only one reaction, and it is a marvel that in that reaction there should be the remotest possibility of the survival of such an idea as the incarnation. For the Christians the danger was the sneer of the intellectual that they who sought to destroy the pagan gods should themselves be committed to a belief in a birth in human flesh by the direct agency of God. We have to remember this background. Yet while this abhorrence was shared by the early Christian writers and particularly the intellectuals of Alexandria, they clung with the utmost tenacity to the doctrine of the incarnation. And though Alexandria did its best to reduce this to more a theophany of the Heavenly Logos than the real manhood of Christ, the historical prevailed even there and the wonder grew as men contemplated the Word become flesh in Christ. Not even then was the full and wholesome significance realized, but faith held tenaciously to the data, to the gift of God, to that which had been seen and heard and which hands had handled of the Word of Life.

Now, without that fundamental fact, Islam when faced with the same problem could only thrust God further and further away from man in the intense desire to shield Him from association with idols, to prevent men degrading Him into an idol with human qualities and human failings.

A strange paradox is presented to us in Alexandrian thought. This is to be seen in the Logos Doctrine, which was used by the early schools to shield God from contamination and to preserve the idea of the inaccessible, exalted God. This is the interest of the *memra* doctrine, and in Alexandria the *logos*, as indwelling or manifested deity, is knowable, while God Himself, as exalted above all human comprehension, is Himself unknowable. Now gradually this *logos* doctrine in its completeness as applied to the historical Christ becomes the expression of the belief in the intimate relation of the Godhead with humanity. That is only preserved in an unutiliated doctrine of the incarnation which does justice to the divine and human in Christ, for Pringle Pattison most acutely observes that Arianism is "a reversion to the idea of a purely transcendent and inaccessible and incommunicable God; and the Arian Christ a demigod called into existence to create the world is a purely mythological being, neither God nor man, but standing midway between the two".<sup>1</sup>

A peculiarity presented in the Islamic doctrine is the manner in which an attempt is made to give a transcendental value to anthropomorphic statements, by a mere exaggeration of the physical and corporeal. Thus in explanation of the Holiness of God we have heard it

<sup>1</sup> *The Spirit*, p. 10.

said that this means that God has no need of food or of the natural functions of the body, and to the one who expressed this there seems to be no idea of any incongruity or impropriety. God's sight is spoken of as ability to see a black ant on a black stone on a dark night. The extent of God's power is defined very often as consisting in the ability to destroy the world and make another in its place. Thus conceptions which might be interpreted spiritually and as such would be really *sui generis* are no more than exaggerations of certain physical details. The way the throne is exalted is by increasing its size or multiplying it many times over. Such points are in the interests of the transcendental, but they fail to effect their end.

It would be a mistake if we supposed that the immanental had no place in the theology of this early period. Thus in Justin, while we find that there is a conception of one who is transcendent and inexpressible, too exalted to be defined, and only revealed to man through the agency of an intermediary, namely, the *Logos*, there is at the same time the positive idea of God as the living God, righteous and compassionate, the Creator of all things and the Father of men who knows all things and governs all things, exercising providential care over all individuals. Philo has a most comprehensive doctrine of providence. "Though God is afar off, He is still nigh, keeping in touch by means of His creative and ruling powers which are close to all, although He has banished the things which are made far from His essential nature."<sup>1</sup> Clement of Alexandria<sup>2</sup> quotes the Epistle of Barnabas with approval where it says, "Wherefore in us God truly dwells in the habitation which we are. How? His word of faith, the calling of His promise, the wisdom of the commandments, the commands of the teaching, Himself prophesying in us, Himself dwelling in us by opening the door of the temple (that is, the mouth) to us, giving repentance to us." Gregory of Nyssa teaches immanence in his *Catechetical Orations*, and the Damascene,<sup>3</sup> speaking of the properties of the divine nature, says, "The divine nature has the property of penetrating all things without mixing with them and of being itself impenetrable by anything else." We have already shown that Al Ash'ari interprets the Mu'tazilite idea of God's dwelling in space as meaning that God governs every place and that His plan or purpose is in every place. This is a form of immanence. It is also true that in Neoplatonism, for all its emphasis on transcendence, the immanental is provided for by the doctrine of procession or emanation. The All-Soul is all the souls. In the Neoplatonism of Proclus we find the providential working balanced against the transcendence of the One. Similarly if we go back to the primitive sources of doctrine in Islam we have the providential work of God set

<sup>1</sup> *De Post. Caini.*, v. (i. 229).

<sup>2</sup> *Stromateis*, vii. 14, 27; vi. 16, 138; ii. 20, 117.

<sup>3</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. XIV (*P.G.*, 94, 860).

in the very forefront. The Near (*al Qarīb*) is as much entitled to a place as a name of God as most of the ninety-nine names which have been chosen from the Qur'ān, though it does not appear in the list. It is, however, in Suras ii. 182, xi. 64, and xxxiv. 49, used as an epithet of God. Thus we may say that, just as transcendence may be conceived in various ways, so too immanence. What is the theory of the "Sole Actor" but a theory of immanent will? Here it might be said that extremes meet. An exaggeration of the absolute will of God becomes a theory of the activity of God in every act of man. No inference may be gathered from phenomena, but nothing happens except by the direct creation of God. This is the paradoxical result of the doctrine of transcendent will in Islam. True, the operation of the divine is conceived more as that of one who stands outside His work fashioning it by continual creation, and is usually related to a severe atomism and so is hardly entitled to be called immanence. But because it is concerned with the psychical as well as the physical, with willing as well as doing, it is not unfair to see in it a substitute for immanence or the nearest approach to such a doctrine that Islam (apart from its mystical sects, which are not typical), can achieve. Nature in things and God's being life within life is, of course, not compatible with such doctrine, and such beliefs are consciously and purposely resisted by the Ash'arites whose system is most widely accepted in Islam.

Whether transcendence or immanence is obnoxious or not depends on the balance which is maintained between the two ideas. Wherever there is overemphasis on one at the expense of the other this is to be reprobated for, rightly considered, they both represent valuable concepts.

#### (VI) NEGATION OR AFFIRMATION?

In the early Mu'tazilite sect we become aware of a wild orgy of negation. "God is one, without a peer, hearing, seeing. He is not a body, not an object, not a mass, not form nor flesh nor blood, nor person, nor substance, nor accident. He has neither colour, taste, smell, texture, heat, cold, moisture nor dryness, nor length, breadth and depth, nor concourse, nor separation, nor does He move or rest. He is neither divided nor possesses parts, organs or members. He has no direction either to right or left, or before or behind, or up or down. No place encompasses Him and time does not pass over Him. Contact is not possible to Him and neither is withdrawal or inherence in a suppositum. He is not qualified with any one of the attributes of creatures which indicate their temporality or creatureliness, and it cannot be said that He is circumscribed. He is neither begetting nor begotten. He is not contained in dimensions. Veils do not hide Him, sense cannot perceive Him and no one can form an idea of Him from analogy. He is in no way resembling creatures. No calamity can

befall Him. Nothing which occurs to any mind or which any fancy can frame is like unto Him. He has not ceased to be the First, the Foremost, who preceded created things, and existed before creation. He has not ceased to be knowing, deciding, and living and neither will He cease so to be. Eyes cannot see Him, sight cannot perceive Him, the imagination cannot conceive Him, neither can He be heard by the ear. He is a thing, but He is not like other things. He knows, decides and lives but not as the knowing, powerful, living things known. Only He is eternal. Beside Him there is no eternal nor is there a God like unto Him. He has no sharer in his Kingship and no minister in His government, nor is there anyone who helps Him in producing what He produces and creating what He creates. . . . There is no sort of connexion between Him and anything which would benefit Him and no harm can touch Him. Joy and sorrow do not move Him, and He feels neither hurt nor pain. No limit can be set to Him whereby He should become finite and the idea of ceasing to be is not applicable to Him. He is not subject to weakness or diminishment. He is exalted above all contact with women, above taking a mate and above begetting children.”<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen that in this long list of negatives there are certain positive qualities mentioned, namely, unity, hearing, seeing, knowing, exercising power (deciding) and living. There were those who extended the scope of the negations they made about God. Thus we have such queer statements as that which is attributed to ‘Abbād b. Sulaimān by Al Ash‘arī,<sup>2</sup> that he said it is not permissible to say that the Creator has not ceased creating, or that He has not ceased not-creating. Similarly it is not permissible to say that God has ceased or not ceased providing or not-providing. Or take what is said of Jubbā’i. He declared that God had not ceased to be not-just and not-wrong, not-being-good and not-being-bad, not-true and not-lying.<sup>3</sup> Indeed the multiplication of negatives makes one wonder sometimes what one is really saying, but as in the end one has aimed at saying nothing it does not much matter either way. Presumably this might be called “reverent agnosticism,” but it sometimes reads more like irreverent mockery. Since Al Ash‘arī mentions another party of the Mu’tazila which said that it was not proper to assert that God has knowledge, power, hearing and sight, and also not proper to assert that God has no power and no knowledge, it becomes quite clear that negation can go no further.

With these examples of the Mu’tazilites’ doctrine should be compared what is said by Pseudo-Dionysius in his *Mystical Theology*: “It is not soul, or mind or endowed with the faculty of imagination, conjecture, reason or understanding; nor is It any act of reason or under-

<sup>1</sup> Al Ash‘arī: *Maqālāt*, i. 155 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, i. 186.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 187.

standing ; nor can It be described by reason or perceived by understanding, seeing It is neither number nor order, nor greatness nor littleness, nor equality nor inequality ; and forasmuch as It is not immobile nor in motion, nor at rest, nor possesses power and is neither power nor light, and does not live and is not life ; neither can It be grasped by the understanding, since It is not knowledge or truth ; neither is It unity nor Godhead nor goodness ; nor is It a Spirit, as we understand that term, forasmuch as It is not Sonship nor Fatherhood ; neither is It any other thing like anything of which we or any other can have knowledge. It cannot be placed in the category of non-existence or of existence, and existing beings do not know It as It actually is, and It does not know them as they actually are. The reason cannot attain to the naming of It or the understanding of It. Neither is It darkness nor light, nor error, nor truth, nor can affirmation or negation apply to It, for when we make affirmations and negations in regard to those orders of being which stand next to It, we do not apply either affirmation or negation to It, for It transcends all affirmation by being the perfect and unique cause of all things and transcends all negation by the pre-eminence of Its simple and absolute nature—free from every limitation and beyond all these.”<sup>1</sup>

We can imagine the reaction of many people to a statement of this description. Part of it seems a flat denial of the substance of revelation, e.g., the Sonship and Fatherhood. It is the exchange of the living God for a mystery. But there was precisely the same sort of reaction from the pious in Islam to the negations which the Mu'tazilites affected. The writings which we now know as Pseudo-Dionysius came to the Christian theologians with the authority of a name to which they were not entitled and the results are apparent for long centuries. The *via negativa* was, of course, not the invention of this writer. We have already had occasion to point out the process of negation which Clement considered it advisable to use. We have seen also how Philo prepared for the future emphasis on the transcendence when he declared that God was possessed of no qualities, meaning thereby that God was immaterial and impassible ; and that God was unrelated, meaning thereby that he was self-sufficient and had need of nothing outside Himself. This is typical of the Alexandrian school and its extreme is reached in the statement of Plotinus.<sup>2</sup> “ How can we make such a statement about It, seeing that all else we say of It is said by way of negation ”, or in the words of Clement, “ We know not what He is but only what He is not. He has no predicates, no genus, no differentiation, no species. He is neither unity nor number, neither accident nor substance. Names denote either attributes or relations but God has none of these.”

<sup>1</sup> Cap. V.

<sup>2</sup> *Enneads*, VI, viii. 11.

Not only the Alexandrians but the theologians of Antioch who showed a certain anti-metaphysical tendency in the delineation of the person of Christ, shared in their doctrine of God with the abstractions which were popular, and they were therefore handicapped in their theory of the incarnation, not so much because they did not give full justice to the manhood of Christ, but because they held such an abstract notion of the Deity that when they came to formulate their doctrine of the incarnation it was inevitable that they should be confronted with the assembling, uniting or blending of two contradictories. Having denied to God all that belonged to creaturely existence they sought to bring back God into relation with creaturely existence in Christ. Here too is the root of a great many of the problems which arise as, e.g., "If Christ is God, why is He not omniscient, omnipotent, and the rest?" We have these as a heritage from the pressing of the *via negativa* to an inordinate degree, because the way to divinity was the negation of the human.

Let it not be supposed that the affirmations of Scripture were not taught. Pseudo-Dionysius heads the third chapter of his *Mystical Theology* with these words, "What are the affirmative expressions in respect to God and what are the negative?" John of Damascus has his statement on the negative attributes and one also on the positive attributes. "Of the divine names some have a negative signification and indicate that He is superessential and such are 'non-essential', 'timeless', 'beginningless', 'invisible', not that God is inferior to anything or lacking in anything but that He is pre-eminently separated from all that is." . . . "Some again have an affirmative signification as indicating that He is the cause of all things. For as the cause of all that is and of all essence, He is called both *Ens* and Essence. And as the cause of all reason and wisdom and the rational and the wise, He is called both reason and rational and wisdom and wise. Similarly He is spoken of as intellect and intellectual, life and living, power and powerful and so on."<sup>1</sup> In this the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius is plain. What is to be deprecated is that the negatives are definitive and that when the positive is approached it is interpreted in accordance with the negatives.

In his *De Principiis* Origen, while not able entirely to free himself from the negative method, gives far more weight to the positive and inclines to make the content of revelation definitive. He starts with the Scriptural statements that God is Spirit and God is Light and then proceeds to infer that this must mean that God is incorporeal and a simple intellectual nature. It is only after this that he proceeds to the negative attributes such as God's being independent of Space and Time, All-knowing, Immutable, Ever-present, Incomprehensible. He is also careful to indicate that the cause of this incomprehensibility is in us

<sup>1</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. XII (P.G., 94, 845).

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and not in God. While he is prepared to accept the impassibility of God, he yet declares God to be the Father, long-suffering, compassionate and pitiful. He has the passion of love.<sup>1</sup> While both Celsus, his opponent, and Clement in his own camp insist on the namelessness of God because no name expresses the attributes which may be fittingly ascribed to God, Origen declares that when we call a fig and a date sweet, we know what we mean though there is no word which expresses the difference in the sweetness of each. So rather than losing himself in negations, Origen would emphasize the perfection of God. To use Islamic terminology, Origen makes use of the method of *tanzīh* when the tendency of the others is to *ta'ñl*.<sup>2</sup> Origen's regard for scripture and his careful exegesis enables him to put the negative method in its proper place and to contemplate the negative attributes in their proper perspective. The way to God is not through abstraction but through revelation. Macdonald remarks that in the case of Islam, the attribution of "otherness" to God did not result in the adoption of an agnostic position but drove Muslims to the acceptance of authoritative revelation. The human mind cannot rest in negation. Its very negations rest upon an implicit affirmation; and though the *via negativa* has been attractive to many minds in Islam and in Christendom, particularly in the mystics, the prior commitment to faith has saved such minds from barren agnosticism. But for a man without faith to approach the idea of God by the *via negativa* is perilous, if not fatal, to his continued interest in religion. And even when revelation is accepted its content is diminished and its value lessened even for the pious. A *Maulūī* was asked the meaning of certain names which are to be found in the list of the ninety-nine beautiful names of God in the Qur'ān. "What is meant by the name Ar Rahim? Can one form an analogy between this name and the quality of mercy possessed by a good man?" "No," was the reply, "because this name applied to Allāh is *lā thānī*," i.e., unique. "How then should one distinguish between Al Kabir and Ar Rahim?" "They are distinguished in the Book, they are written differently, they are pronounced differently, but the real (*ma'nawī*) distinction is known to Allāh alone. All the names of Allāh are *lā thānī*." "Then why not reduce the ninety-nine names to the one name *lā thānī*?" Thus if the letter of the revelation is accepted and the content cannot be filled in by reference to the ordinary concepts by which thought is possible, then of what value is a scripture or revelation except to use in ritual recitation?

#### B. THE GRACE OF GOD

The matters discussed in the earlier part of this survey are those which are definitive for the theology of Islam, and when we come to

<sup>1</sup> In *Ezech. Hom.*, vi. 6, and *Num. Hom.*, xxiii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *De Principiis*, ii. 9 and iv. 35.

the question of what part the grace of God has in the doctrine of Islam, we are dealing with that which has become secondary and derivative. Much that has a bearing on this doctrine must come up for consideration when the doctrines of the divine government, the ordering and controlling of the universe are dealt with. There we shall find much which is apposite in the discussion of the Justice of God and Predestination. Here the doctrine of the Grace of God is dealt with not so much in relation to its effects on man, as in respect to the light it throws on the conception of God.

Broadly speaking, the lack of affinity between God and man is the rock on which this doctrine founders. Without the strong insistence on the utter unlikeness of man and God, an unlikeness which had to be maintained in view of the denial of the Incarnation, there might possibly have been another course for Islamic doctrinal systematization to take. Now, whatever is thought to obtrude upon the solitary, independent grandeur of Allah must be modified. If a different emphasis had been made on the terms already provided in the Qur'ān, which repeatedly sets forth the Compassionate, Merciful and Forgiving God, and if these terms had become definitive for the whole statement of Muslim doctrine, a deeper approximation to Christianity might have been manifested. But as it is, the Mercy and the Compassion of God become the prerogative of power. God wills and acts, and among the things he purposed and does are those which may be described as compassionate and merciful. Christianity when rightly presented makes the acts of God flow from the Love of God. Islam makes the love of God consequent upon the comprehensiveness of His acts, which include acts which may be, in a sense, called loving acts, though there can be no univocal predication of love to man and God. This is a very summary way of expressing the difference. The subject really demands much more detailed treatment than is possible here, because it is of fundamental importance. It is intended, God willing, to treat the matter more adequately in the final critical and reconstructive section of this study.

Here the best way to approach the subject seems to be to set forth the Quranic teaching on such subjects as apparently throw light on the main doctrine, and then to look at some of the fragmentary arguments which the heresiologists have recorded. It is too early to look at what Al Ghazzālī had to say on the doctrine of the love of God,<sup>1</sup> which is a pity, for his is the nearest approach to the Christian conception, and the deficiencies in his doctrine help to bring out more clearly the points in which the Muslim and the Christian doctrines differ. However, what he has said will find its proper place elsewhere. The purpose of mentioning him here is so that it may not be thought that he has been overlooked.

## (I) THE QURANIC TEACHING ON DIVINE FORGIVENESS

The Arabic terms used for forgiveness are chiefly derivatives of the roots *GhFR* and *'FW*. Lane says with regard to the former, “*Maghfira* and *Ghufrān* on the part of God, signify the preserving a man from being touched by punishment . . . *Għafir*, *Għafür* and *Għaffär*, are epithets applied to God. The second and the third are intensive . . . meaning covering and forgiving much the sins, crimes and offences of His servants, or very forgiving.” With this may be compared the Hebrew *KPR*, as, for instance, in Ps. lxx. 38. “For He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and destroyed them not.” The root *'FW* is used in the sense of erasing, exempting and averting. God may be said to avert harm from men. Thus one derivative, according to Lane, “signifies God’s defending thee from men and defending them from thee. Ibn Athir says, ‘It signifies His rendering thee independent or in no need of them, and rendering them independent or in no need of thee, and averting their harm from thee and thy harm from them ; and some say that it signifies one’s forgiving or pardoning men and their forgiving or pardoning him.’” This persists in the commonest notion of the meaning of *mu'āfi* which is hardly more than a declaration that a wrongdoer is by this in no danger from the consequences of his wrong act. A similar idea is to be found in the derivative *'afwa* which is a bloodwit by which a man guilty of homicide avoids the law of retaliation evoked by the heirs of the slain man.

One of the names of God in the Qur’ān is *Al Ḥalīm*. This term is usually translated as “clement”. The term is often used in the Qur’ān in a context expressing the forgiving acts of God. The word is, however, one which has a strange history. Originally the root is related to the symptoms and disturbances of adolescence. Then it comes to have a derived meaning appropriate to the one who has passed through these disturbing symptoms and has become settled and calm. It is in this latter sense that it is applied to God. God is not hasty or easily put out. It is not easy to put Him in a passion. Lane is illuminating on this point. “*Al Ḥalim* is one of the names of God ; meaning (the Forbearing, or Clement, etc., or) He whom the disobedience of the disobedient does not flurry, nor anger against them disquiet, but who has appointed to everything a term to which it must finally come.” The verbal noun *ḥilm*, variously translated meekness and clemency means, “the management of one’s soul and temper on the occasion of excitement to anger ; or tranquillity on the occasion of the emotion of anger ; or delay in requiting the wrongdoer”. The term *ḥalim* is applied to the son of Abraham who was led to sacrifice, presumably with the thought that he was submissive to his father’s will and was not perturbed by the preparations which his father made. The term is applied to God in Suras ii. 225, 236, 265 ; iii. 149 ; v. 101 ;

xxii. 58 ; lxiv. 17 ; xvii. 46 ; xxxiii. 51 ; xxxv. 39. It may be remarked that something more than calm and deliberateness in forgiveness is indicated in Isa. lxiii. 9 and Jer. xv. 15 (cf. also Exod. xxxiv. 6 f. and Ps. lxxxvi. 15). Real forgiveness must be an agony in the forgiver.

Another name of God in the ninety-nine, expressing the patience of God is *Aṣ Sabūr*. It is strange to find it there and not in the Qur'ān. The root meaning would be "bearing" and presumably it is thought that in the sense of " forbearing" it is appropriate to God although it is not found in the sacred text.

The general fact that *God forgives the sins of men* is repeatedly proclaimed in the Qur'ān. "Say, O my servants, who have been extravagant against their own souls, be not in despair of the mercy of God; verily God forgives sins, all of them, verily He is forgiving, merciful" (Sura xxxix. 54). "The sending down of the Book from God the Mighty, the Knowing, the Forgiver of sin and the Acceptor of repentance, keen at punishment, long-suffering (*dhi't-tawwāb*)" (Sura xl. 1 f.). It is to be noted that neither long-suffering nor "acceptor of repentance" (*qābil u't-tawwāb*) is included in the ninety-nine beautiful names (but see later on *Tawwāb*). Other passages are Suras lxxxv. 13-14; vii. 22; xi. 49; lxxi. 29, and xlvi. 29. Muslims are bidden to pray (Sura lxvi. 8) "O Lord perfect for us our light and forgive us; verily thou art mighty over all." The call of the prophets to men is that they may receive the pardon of God., e.g., Sura. lxxi. 6. And the prophet's sins are forgiven by God (Sura. xlvi. 2). The manifestation of the forgiveness of God is in the sending down of the Qur'ān (Sura xxv. 7). A further manifestation of divine forgiveness is in providence (Suras xxxiv. 14 and xxxv. 39).

The *conditions of forgiveness* are variously described. One is following the Prophet (Suras iii. 29; lvii. 28; xlvi. 30, and lxxi. 4). The burden of this is "O our people! Respond to God's crier and believe in Him and He will pardon you your sins and deliver you." "O ye who believe, fear Allah and believe in His Messenger; He will give you two portions of His mercy and will make you a light for you to walk in and will forgive you; for God is forgiving, compassionate." Another condition mentioned is conversion to Islam (Suras ix. 5; xlvi. 14; and ix. 12). Forsaking polytheism (*shirk*) is a necessary condition (Suras v. 78; xxxiii. 73; iv. 51).<sup>1</sup> The last reference declares that God will not forgive any one who associates anything with Him. "Verily God pardons not the associating aught with Him, but He pardons anything short of that to whomsoever He pleases; but he who associates aught with God he hath devised a great sin." It is, nevertheless, recorded that Abraham prayed for his father who was an idolater (Sura xxvi. 86). *Repentance and belief are also express conditions of forgiveness.* "Who-soever repents after his transgression (*zulm*) and acts aright, God will

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Suras viii. 39 and v. 116-18; iv. 116, 152; and ii. 49.

turn to him : for verily God is forgiving, merciful " (Sura v. 43). " Save he who turns again and believes and does a righteous work ; for as to these, God will change their evil deeds to good, for God is ever forgiving, merciful " (Sura xxv. 70).<sup>1</sup> The bearers of the Throne pray, " Pardon those who turn repentant and follow thy way and guard them from the torment of Hell " (Sura xl. 7). It is sometimes represented that a *simple request procures the Divine pardon*, " Yet whoso does evil and wrongs himself and then asks pardon of God shall find God forgiving and merciful ; whoso commits a crime, he only commits it against himself, for God is knowing, wise " (Sura iv. 110, see also iii. 129). In a few verses there are mentioned certain *obscure grounds for the divine forgiveness*. Thus in Sura iii. 80-83, " How shall God guide people who have disbelieved after believing and bearing witness that the Messenger is true and after there have come to them manifest signs ? God guides not the unjust folk. These, their reward is that on them is the curse of God and of the angels and of men together ; they shall abide therein for ever, the torment shall not be alleviated from them, nor shall they be respite ; save those who repent after that and act rightly, for verily, God is forgiving and merciful." This is a very obscure verse. What does " after that " refer to ? After being in Hell or after they have apostasized ? In any case forgiveness is gathered in as a sort of after-thought. Again in Sura ii. 54-55, " And we overshadowed you with the cloud and sent down the manna and the quails, ' Eat of the good things we have given you '. They did not wrong us but it was themselves they were wronging. And when we said, ' Enter this city and eat therefrom as plentifully as ye wish ; and enter the gate worshipping and say *hattatun*'. So will we pardon you your sins and give increase to those who do well." Note that sin does not harm God.

In the following passages *forgiveness is spoken of in relation to expiation*. " O ye believers kill not game while ye are on pilgrimage. But he amongst you who kills it purposely, his expiation is the like of that which he has killed in sheep—of which two equitable persons from amongst you shall be judge—an offering brought to the Ka'aba ; or as an expiation the food of poor persons, or an equivalent thereof in fasting, that he may taste the evil result of his act. God pardons ('afa) bygones ; but whoso goes back God will take vengeance on him : for God is mighty and the avenger. Lawful for you is the game of the sea and to eat thereof ; a provision for you and for travellers ; but forbidden to you is the game of the land while ye are on pilgrimage ; so fear God, to whom ye shall be gathered. God has made the Ka'aba, the sacred house, to be a station for men, and the sacred month and the offering and its neck-garland ; this is that ye may know that God

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Suras vii. 152 ; iv. 136, 166 ; xlvi. 36 ; xvi. 120 ; xvii. 27 viii. 7? : and xlii. 24.

knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, and that God knows all things. Know that God is keen to punish but that God is forgiving, merciful" (Sura v. 96-98). "Verily God both pardons and forgives. But those who back out of their wives and then would recall their speech—then the manumission of a captive before they touch each other ; that is what ye are admonished, and God is well aware of what ye do" (Sura lviii. 3). Just as forgiveness may follow expiation so also *forgiveness is a reward for well-doing*. "If ye lend to God a goodly loan, He will double it for you and will forgive you ; for God is grateful, clement" (Sura lxiv. 17). "Of the Arabs of the desert are some who believe in God and the last day, and who take what they expend in alms to be a means of approach to God and to the Apostle's prayers—is it not a means of approach for them ? God will make them to enter into His mercy ; verily, God is forgiving and merciful" (Sura ix. 100). "Those who recite the book of God, and are steadfast in prayer, and give alms of what we have bestowed in secret and in public, hope for the merchandise that shall not come to naught ; that He may pay them their hire, and give them increase of His grace (*fadl*), verily, He is forgiving, grateful" (Sura xxxv. 27).<sup>1</sup>

Forgiveness is for the most part conceived eschatologically. The Last Day will make it plain whether a man has been forgiven or not, and the great grace of God will be in the reward of Paradise. "Have they associates who have enjoined on them any religion which God does not permit ?—but were it not for the word of the decree it would have been decreed to them. Verily, the unjust—for them is grievous woe. Thou shalt see the unjust shrink in terror from what they have gained as it falls upon them ; and those who believe and do right, in meads of Paradise, they shall have what they please with their Lord ;—that is great grace ! That is what God gives glad tidings of to His servants who believe and do righteous deeds. Say, 'I do not ask for it a hire—only the love of my kinsfolk'. And he who gains a good action we will increase good for him thereby ; verily, God is forgiving and grateful."<sup>2</sup> It should be specially noticed that this is one of the few passages where, in spite of the general tenor of the verses, acts are considered to be not for recompense but for the love of men. "Those who, when they do a crime or wrong themselves, remember God, and ask forgiveness for their sins, and who forgives sins save God ? and do not persevere in what they did, the while they know, these have their reward : pardon from their Lord, and gardens beneath which rivers flow, dwelling therein for ever ; for pleasant is the hire of those who act like this" (Sura iii. 129-130). "He will pardon you your sins and bring you into gardens beneath which rivers flow, and goodly dwellings in gardens of Eden ; that is the mighty bliss !" (Sura lxi. 12). "Pardon Thou our

<sup>1</sup> See also Suras iv. 101 ; xxxiii. 24 ; xvi. 111 ; iv. 98 ; and xxxiii. 35.  
<sup>2</sup> Sura xlvi. 20-22.

sins and keep us from the torment of the Fire" (Sura iii. 14).<sup>1</sup> In the following passages forgiveness is most clearly escape from the Fire. "They who sell guidance for error and pardon for torment, how patient must they be of fire!" (Sura ii. 170). "Those invite you to the Fire but God invites you to Paradise and pardon by His permission" (Sura ii. 221). "Those who misbelieve, for them is keen torment. But those who believe and do right, for them is forgiveness and a great recompense" (Sura xxxv. 7-8).

In many passages it is plainly shown that *forgiveness is an exercise of the divine prerogative*. "And should God touch thee with harm, there is none to remove it save Him; and if He wish thee well, there is none to repel His grace; He makes it fall on whom He will of His servants; for He is pardoning and merciful" (Sura x. 107). "He pardons whom He pleases and torments whom He pleases; and God is forgiving, merciful" (Sura xlvi. 14). "Make no excuse! Ye have disbelieved after your faith. If we forgive one sect of you, we will punish another sect for that they sinned" (Sura ix. 67). "God's is what is in the heavens and in the earth. He forgives whom He pleases, and punishes whom He pleases, for God is forgiving and merciful" (Sura iii. 124). "But the Jews and the Christians say 'We are the sons of God and His beloved.' Say, 'Why then does He punish you for your sins?' Nay, ye are mortals of those whom He has created! He pardons whom He pleases and punishes whom He pleases; for God's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and what is between the two, and unto Him the journey is" (Sura v. 21).<sup>2</sup> Forgiveness is related to the decree in the following passages: "Do ye not know that God—His is the kingdom. He punishes whom He pleases and forgives whom He pleases for God is mighty over everything (*qad̄ir*)" (Sura v. 44). "It is the same to them whether thou dost ask forgiveness for them or whether thou dost not ask forgiveness for them; God will not forgive them" (Sura lxiii. 6).<sup>3</sup>

*Defective conceptions* are implicit in the following passages: "Verily those of you who turned your backs on that day when the two armies met, it was but Satan who made them slip for something they had earned. But God has now pardoned them; verily, God is forgiving and clement" (Sura iii. 149). One might observe that if God is ready to put the blame on the Devil in this instance, why should not men plead this always and if the blame is really the Devil's then there does not seem to be anything very meritorious in the divine forgiveness of his victims. "The reward of those who make war against God and His Messenger, and strive after violence in the earth, is only that they

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Suras iii. 191; iv. 98; v. 12; xxxiv. 4; xxxvi. 10; xli. 32; xlvi. 17; xlvi. 26; liii. 32 f.; and lvii. 19 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See also Suras iii. 29, 124; iv. 51; and ix. 27.

<sup>3</sup> See also Sura v. 44.

may be slaughtered or crucified, or their hands cut off and their feet on alternate sides, or that they be banished from the land ; that is a disgrace for them in this world, and for them in the next is mighty woe ; except for those who repent before ye have them in your power, for know ye that God is forgiving, merciful " (Sura v. 37-38). In such a context the ascription of forgiving mercy to God seems hardly apposite. " O believers, ask not about things which if they be shown you will give you trouble (or bring you under obligation) ; but if ye ask about them when the Qur'ān is revealed, they shall be shown you. God pardons that, for God is forgiving and clement " (Sura v. 101). This is a strange passage. It puts a premium on ignorance. It is better to be ignorant concerning some matters because if a question is asked touching conduct and then an answer is given by the Prophet, this will have the character of an ordinance and will entail obedience. The natural thing would be to ask about what had not been revealed and when it had been revealed in the Qur'ān, what further need to ask concerning it ? It will be seen that forgiveness is here related to a casuistical ethic. " We said to them, ' Become ye apes despised and spurned, and then thy Lord proclaimed that He would surely send against them, till the resurrection day, those who should wreak upon them evil torment ; verily thy Lord is quick at following up, but verily He is forgiving, merciful.' " (Sura vii. 166) ; " But thy Lord is forgiving, endowed with mercy ; were He to punish them for what they have earned He would have hastened for them the torment " (Sura xviii. 57). Forgiveness is thus negative and consists in not punishing.<sup>1</sup>

The imperfect conception of forgiveness is most strongly indicated by the numerous instances where it is frankly conceived as merely *concession, indulgence or relaxation of a law*. Thus in Sura ii. 168 forgiveness means that God will overlook a technical breach of the requirements with regard to forbidden food. In Sura ii. 178 forgiveness is related to a concession in altering the terms of a will in special circumstances. In Sura ii. 187-88 the killing of opponents is a divine command, but can by the forgiving mercy of God be relaxed in certain conditions, i.e., when they give up their rebellion. In verses 194-95 of the same sura the indulgence of God is given to former practices because He is forgiving and merciful, " Pour ye forth from whence men do pour forth and ask pardon of God ; verily, God is forgiving and merciful." " He will not catch you up for a casual word in your oaths " (Sura ii. 225-26). In Sura iv. 30 the forgiveness relates to a lighter punishment in certain cases of fornication. Suras v. 5 ; vi. 54 and 146 express concession in cases of ignorance or compulsion. God's forgiving nature is exhibited by what He permits men to do in Sura lxvi. 1. Other concessions are : shortening the night prayer (Sura lxxiii. 20), the per-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Suras xxiv. 5 ; lxvii. 2 ; xlvi. 32 ; and xxii. 59, where, though forgiveness is ascribed to God, it is in relation to matters which hardly seem apposite.

forming of ablutions with sand (Sura iv. 46), for weak men and women and children who are not good at scheming (Sura iv. 100), in respect to the equal treatment of wives (Sura iv. 128), in the case of a mistake in reference to relationship (Sura xxxiii. 5), a special concession in relation to the Prophet (Sura xxxiii. 50). Sura ii. 286 gathers up the thought with greater tenderness, and makes it clear that forgiveness is God's making things easier for men out of His condescension to their weakness. Is it not a much better conception to regard God's forgiveness as giving power to the weak so that they may endure hardness?<sup>1</sup>

An interesting element in the Quranic teaching is the suggestion of reciprocity to man's repentance which breaks into the almost unrelieved conception of the imperturbability and calm of the serene and immutable Deity. God is conceived as *At Tawwāb*. We have already seen that this term is one which is inherited from the older faiths. The translation of the term is variously made. Palmer sometimes translates it with a passive "easily turned" and sometimes as "relentant" and "relenting". The primary meaning is "one who turns much", "one whose métier it is to turn". God wishes to repent over man. "God wishes to explain to you and to guide you into the ordinances of those who were before you, and to turn towards you, for God is knowing, wise. God wishes to turn towards you, but those who follow their lusts wish that ye may deviate with a great deviation! God wishes to make it light for you: for man was created weak."<sup>2</sup> We find it, however, in the same context as the other expressions and the divine prerogative is the ever-present determinative principle. Thus in Sura iii. 123, "Thou hast nothing to do with the affair at all whether He turn towards them again or punish them, for verily they are unjust," and in Sura iv. 21, "God is only bound to turn again towards those who do evil through ignorance and then turn again. Surely these will God turn to again, for God is knowing, wise. His turning again is not for those who do evil until when death comes before one of them he says, 'Now I turn again', nor yet for those who die in disbelief. For such as these have we prepared a grievous woe." The last verse makes the turning of God consequent upon the turning or repentance of man, but there is one passage where the reverse seems to be indicated, namely, in Sura ix. 119, "He repented over them that they might also repent, verily God is easily turned and merciful." There can be no doubt that this is the supreme point which the Qur'ān touches.<sup>3</sup> The passages in the Qur'ān should be compared with Zech. i. 3 and those other passages in the Old Testament where God is said to repent, e.g.,

<sup>1</sup> Other passages where the idea of concession is prominent are Suras ii. 183; viii. 70-71; xvi. 116; xxiv. 62; lviii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Sura iv. 31-32.

<sup>3</sup> Other references are Suras ii. 122; ii. 35, 51, 154-55; ix. 27, 103, 105; xxiv. 10; xxxiii. 73; xlvi. 12; iv. 20, 67; cx. 3; v. 43, 75; lviii. 14.

Gen. vi. 6 f.; Exod. xxxii. 14; Judges ii. 18; Ps. xc. 13; Joel ii. 13 f.;  
Jer. xviii. 8 f.<sup>1</sup>

## (II) THE DIVINE MERCY IN THE QUR'ĀN

The idea of the divine mercy is expressed in the Qur'ān by the use of words derived from the root *RHM*. The most usual epithets derived from this root and applied to God are *Ar Rahmān* and *Ar Rahīm*, the former "tropically or anthropopathically" used of God is usually translated Compassionate and the latter, representing a permanent quality, is usually translated Merciful. *Rahma*, mercy, indicates in general usage "tenderness of heart" and an inclination which requires the exercise of favour and beneficence on the part of its subject. When applied to God, however, the terms are used and understood in their ultimate significance as actions and not in their primary significance which is passion. This is in view of the impassibility of God. The name *Ar Rahmān* is not used in the Qur'ān very noticeably in reference to the exercise of mercy. It seems to be mainly used as a proper name of God alternative to Allāh. This is implied in Sura xvii. 110 and also in xxv. 60-61 where the people ask "Who is Rahmān?" In some cases the context is definitely opposed to the idea that God is merciful, e.g., in Sura xxv. 28 we read, "The true kingdom (or the real kingship) on that day will belong to the Merciful and it will be a hard day for the unbelievers." In Sura xix. 76 we find, "Whoever is in error, let Rahmān extend to him length of days, until they see what they are threatened with whether it be the torment or whether it be the Hour. They will then know who is worse placed and weakest in forces." Similarly in Sura xxxvi. 22, "If the Merciful desires harm for me their intercession cannot avail me at all nor can they rescue me." After a careful scrutiny nothing can be gathered from the context of any text in which this name is used which affords any enlightenment on the subject of the mercy of God.<sup>2</sup>

The other expression is a true attribute. In Sura vi. 12 and 54 the remarkable phrase occurs "(Allah) has written mercy on His soul." God is said to be endowed with mercy (Sura xviii. 57), and the treasuries of His mercy are spoken of in Suras xvii. 102; xxxviii. 8, and xlivi. 31. Specially noteworthy are the following: "Our Lord, thou dost embrace all things in mercy and knowledge" (Sura xl. 7) and "My punishment —with it I fall on whom I will and my mercy embraceth everything. I will write it down for those who fear and who give alms and those

<sup>1</sup> But cf. also I Sam. xv. 29, etc.

<sup>2</sup> The following is a complete list of references: the heading of every Sura except ix. in the *bismillāh*, Suras ii. 158; xix. 18, 27, 45, 46, 59, 81, 88, 90, 91, 93, 94, 96; xx. 4, 92, 107-8; xxi. 26, 37, 43, 112; xxv. 28, 60, 61, 64; xxvi. 4; xxvii. 30; xxxvi. 14, 22, 52; xlivi. 32, 35, 44, 81; 1. 32; lxx. 22; lxvii. 29; lxxviii. 37; \*xlii. 29; xix. 62, 70, 76; xxxvi. 10; xli 1; xlivi. 16-18; lv. *passim*; lxxviii. 38. The series commencing with the asterisk is specially noteworthy.

who believe in our signs" (Sura vii. 155). Men are told that they should never despair of God's mercy (Suras xxxix. 54; xxix. 22 and xv. 56).

The action of God is considered as dividing men by His *predestining will to mercy or to wrath*. "Had thy Lord pleased He would have made men one nation but they will not cease to differ, save those upon whom thy Lord has had mercy. For this has He created them and the word of thy Lord is fulfilled, 'I will surely fill Hell with *jinn* and mankind together'" (Sura xi. 120). "Your Lord knows you best; if He please He will have mercy on you, or if He please He will torment you" (Sura xvii. 56). "The day of their dividing (i.e., the evil from the good, etc.) is their appointed term; the day when patron shall not avail client at all, nor shall they be helped; except whomsoever God has compassionated" (verb in the perfect, Sura xliv. 42). "God specially favours with His mercy whom He will" (Sura ii. 99). "Grace is in the hand of God. He gives to whomsoever He pleases" (Sura iii. 67). These passages make it plain that there is no inward compulsion of grace within the being of God. Other passages of the same kind are Suras xlviii. 25; lxxvi. 31; xxxiii. 17; xxix. 20; xii. 56, etc. The mercy of God is irresistible (Suras xxxix. 39 and xxxv. 2).

The idea of "*entering into God's mercy*" is frequently expressed, e.g., "As for those who believe in God and take tight hold of Him, He will make them enter into mercy from Him and grace and He will guide them unto Himself by a right way" (Sura iv. 174). This is considered as bliss or blessedness (Sura xlvi. 29). God's *preventient mercy* is referred to in a number of passages, e.g., "Were it not for God's grace upon thee and His mercy, a party of them would have tried to lead thee astray, but they only lead themselves astray. They shall not hurt you in anything, for God hath sent down on thee the book and wisdom and taught thee what thou dost know, for God's grace was mighty upon thee" (Sura iv. 113). Other references are Suras ii. 61; xxiv. 10, 20, 21; xl. 7-9; iv. 85. The last verse is a peculiar one, "But were it not for God's grace upon you and His mercy ye had followed Satan, save a few." The exception is strange, implying that there are some who escape following Satan without God's mercy.

Sometimes *mercy* is represented as the reward for good deeds. "And the believers, men and women, are some the patrons of others; they bid what is reasonable and forbid what is wrong and are steadfast in prayer and give alms and obey God and His Messenger. On these will God have mercy" (Sura ix. 72). Similarly, "Verily those who believe, and those who flee and those who wage war in God's way, these may hope for God's mercy: for God is forgiving and merciful" (Sura ii. 215).<sup>1</sup> This is also expressed as gaining God's mercy as if it were something to be earned. "O ye who believe, devour not usury doubly doubled,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Suras iv. 98 and iii. 151.

but fear God, perchance ye may be prosperous. Fear the fire which is prepared for the unbelievers and obey God and His Messenger, perchance ye may get mercy" (Sura iii. 125).<sup>1</sup> *Mercy wards off punishment.* This is a frequently repeated thought, as, e.g., in Suras vii. 70; xi. 61, 69, 97, and xxxvi. 44, etc.

The *mercies of God are also seen in providence* (Sura xxx. 45): the wind (xxv. 50), night (xxviii. 73), special providences (xviii. 64; xix. 1; xxi. 84; xxxviii. 42; xi. 76), prophets (xliv. 5), Jesus Christ (xix. 21), Muhammad (ix. 62; xxi. 107, etc.), his policy (iii. 153), God's gift to Muhammad (xi. 30, 66), Scriptures (xii. 111), the Book (vi. 155, 158; xvi. 66, 91; xxviii. 86; xxxi. 2), the Law of Moses (xxviii. 43; xlvi. 11), and the Qur'an (xxviii. 86).

In a few passages *God is described as the most merciful of the merciful* (Suras vii. 150; xii. 64; xii. 92; xxi. 83). The comparison suggests some sort of similarity, but on the whole this interpretation is rejected in the interests of a doctrine of the utter difference of God.

### (III) THE DIVINE FAVOUR OR APPROVAL

The Qur'an expresses the divine satisfaction, approval, favour or propitiation by the use of words derived from the root *RDW*, in this following the cognate languages and the terms used in the Old Testament. The majority of cases seem to echo the "joy of the Lord" used in an eschatological sense. In cognate languages *rīḍwān* is used as a name for Paradise. A typical passage is Sura iii. 13–14, "For those who are pious are gardens with their Lord beneath which rivers flow; they shall dwell therein forever; and pure wives and *favour from Allah*. And Allah is observant of the servants who say 'Lord, we believe, pardon Thou our sins and keep us from the torment of the Fire.'"<sup>2</sup> It is by the favour of God that there will be permission to speak on the Day of Judgment (Sura xx. 108). Not only is the favour of God contrasted with Hell, but it is contrasted with the unhappy lot of those who suffer for the faith in this world. A passage of much interest is Sura iii. 163–68, "Do not reckon those who were killed in the way of God as dead but living with their Lord, provided and happy in what Allah has bestowed on them of His grace (*fāḍl*) and glad at news of those who have been left behind and have not yet reached them. There shall be no fear upon them nor shall they be grieved, rejoicing at good tidings of a boon from Allah and grace, and that Allah does not waste the recompense of the believers who responded to Allah and the Messenger after what they had suffered, for those of them who have done good and been pious is a great recompense. To whom when men said, 'Men have gathered to you; so fear them', their faith increased

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also xxiv. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Other passages are Suras iii. 155–56; ix. 21, 73, 110; xlvi. 29–30; ix. 101; xxviii. 8, and v. 119.

and they said, ‘ Allah is our sufficiency and an excellent protector’. And they were translated into a bounty from Allah and grace ; no evil touched them and they sought the favour of Allah, and Allah is possessed of great grace.” Sometimes the term is used without any more significance than the will or pleasure of God (Sura v. 5 and 18).<sup>1</sup> In a few cases it signifies the propitiation of God (Suras ix. 63 ; xx. 86). The observance of ritual worship is said to please Him, “ O ye who believe ! do not profane the monuments of God nor the sacred month, nor the offering, nor its neck-garlands, nor those who sojourn at the sacred house, craving grace from their Lord and His favour ” (Sura v. 2). “ Thou mayst see them prostrating and adoring, craving grace from God and His favour—their marks are on their faces from the effects of adoration ” (Sura xlviii. 29, of Christians). This is comparable with Job xxxiii. 26, “ He prayeth unto God and He is favourable unto him ” where the same root is used.<sup>2</sup> Righteous conduct is rewarded with His favour, “ God was well-pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance to thee under the tree and He knew what was in their hearts and sent down His Shechina upon them and rewarded them with a victory nigh at hand and many spoils for them to seize ” (Sura xlviii, 18-19).<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the rejection of sinners by God and the denial of His favour is reminiscent of the prophetic note in the Old Testament, “ But mockery, they invented it ; we only prescribed to them the craving after the favour of God and they observed it not with due observance ” (Sura lvii. 27). “ God loves not the deceitful sinner. They hide themselves from men ; but they cannot hide themselves from God : for He is with them while they brood at night over speeches that please Him not ” (Sura iv. 108).<sup>4</sup> We find the contrast between wrath and favour in the Old Testament also, “ In my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee ” (Isa. lx. 10). “ His anger is but for a moment ; In His favour is life ” (Ps. xxx. 5). In all the Old Testament passages quoted or referred to the same root is used.

In some dozen passages God is spoken of as being kind or pitiful (*Ar Ra'uf*), e.g., “ He it is who sends down on His servants manifest signs, to bring you forth from the darkness into the light, for verily God to you is kind and compassionate ” (Sura lvii. 9) ; but usually, and this is the case with all the names of God in a greater or lesser degree, there is little in the context to provide reason for the use of the epithet. Thus, “ Are those so crafty in evil sure that God will not cleave open the earth with them, or bring them to torment from whence they cannot perceive, or seize them in their going to and fro ? For

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ezra x. 11 ; Ps. xl. 8, ciii. 21, cxlii. 10, cxlix. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also Ezek. xlivii. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Suras xxvii. 19 ; xxxix. 9, and xlvi. 14 ; cf. Eccles. ix. 7 ; 1 Chron. xxix. 17 ; Ps. v. 12 ; Deut. xxxiii. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ps. ii. 16 ; Mic. vi. 7 ; Mal. i. 10 ; Jer. xiv. 19.

they cannot render Him helpless. Or that He should seize them with a gradual destruction ? For verily your Lord is kind and merciful ” (Sura xvi. 48-49). One should perhaps refer here to the name of God *Al Mu'akhir*, the Deferrer, which finds its origin in such passages as Sura lxxi. 2-4. “ Said he (Noah), ‘ O my people, lo I am to you an obvious warner that ye serve God and fear Him and obey me. He will pardon you your sins and will defer you unto an appointed time ; verily, God's appointed time when it comes will not be put off, did ye but know.’ ” This is, however, in no way comparable with the personal concern which is expressed in Is. xlviii. 9 ff., “ For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee but not as silver ; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, for mine own sake, will I do it ; for how should my name be profaned ? and my glory will I not give to another.”<sup>1</sup>

#### (IV) THE LOVE OF GOD

The love which is expressed in the Qur'ān is “ preference ” or “liking”, and so in the very nature of the case cannot be a love for sinners. We, therefore, find that it is declared that God loves the kind, the patient, those who trust (Sura iii. 128, 140, 153) ; He loves those who do good (Sura v. 94), the pious (Sura ix. 4), and the clean (Sura ix. 109). On the other hand, He does not love the unjust (Sura iii. 134), the arrogant (Sura xvi. 25), the unbelieving traitor (Sura xxii. 39), those who exult (Sura xxviii. 76), evildoers (Sura xxviii. 77), unbelievers (Sura xxx. 44), the miserly (Sura iv. 41), the corrupt (Sura v. 69), transgressors (Sura v. 89), the extravagant (Sura vii. 29), the treacherous (Sura viii. 60). “ O ye who believe, whoso is turned away from his religion God will bring instead a people whom He loves and who love Him, humble to believers and lofty to unbelievers, strenuous in the way of God, fearing not the blame of anyone who blames. That is God's grace. He gives it unto whom He pleases, for God both comprehends and knows.” Beside these the name *Al Wudūd*, the Loving, is given to God in two places (Suras xi. 92 and lxxxv. 14). The name is defined as “ an epithet applied to God, ‘ the loving towards His servants, or towards those who obey, or He who regards with approbation His righteous servants, or He who is beloved in the hearts of His servants ’ ”.

We cannot do better than quote Macdonald on this important subject.<sup>2</sup> “ What is meant by the love of Allah for His creatures ? That He does love them is plain from divers passages in the Qur'ān . . . and many traditions. ‘ Love ’ is a word applied first to human relationships and secondly to Allah. But when the words are so

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Davidson : *Theology of the Old Testament*, 173 f.

<sup>2</sup> ERE art. *Blessedness (Muhammadan)*, Vol. II, 678.

transformed the meaning is changed. They can never mean the same thing in man and in Allah. In man, love is an inclination of the soul to something that suits it that is lacking in it and from the gaining of which it expects profit and pleasure. All that is impossible in Allah, the Perfect, the Unchanging, who can contemplate nothing but Himself and His own acts as there is nothing else in existence. Love then in Allah means : (1) the removal of the veil from the heart of the creature that he may see Allah ; (2) the giving power to that creature to draw near to Allah ; and (3) Allah's willing this from all eternity. For Allah's love of a creature is from eternity inasmuch as it is related to His eternal will, which requires that the creature in question should be given the power to follow the path that brings him near to Allah. But His love is, in time, in relation to the action which draws away the veil. So there is no change in Allah or drawing near by Allah, or supplying of a lack in Allah. These terms apply only to the creature. And the signs of Allah's love are the trials which come upon creatures. If anyone loves Allah and is sorely tried, he may know that Allah loves him and is drawing him near through these trials." How far this is removed from the love which is self-imparting, the *agape* of God, and the love which issues in reconciliation and fellowship will be obvious.

In the Old Testament the love of God is left inexplicable because it cannot be explained by reference to its object but only by reference to its Subject. In the Qur'ān there is an attempt to refer divine love to its object, but when referred to its Subject it is only to God's will and not to His nature. "The Jews and Christians say, 'We are the sons of God and His beloved.' Say, 'Why then does He punish you for your sins ? Nay, ye are mortals of those whom He created. He pardons whom He pleases and punishes whom He pleases ; for God's is the kingdom of the heaven and the earth and what is between the two, and unto Him the journey is '" (Sura v. 21). And while it is true, as Macdonald says, that the love of God is conceived as from eternity, it is only so by foreordination, and as far as concerns the individual, it is represented in the Qur'ān as following the love which man shows to God. "If ye would love God, then follow me and God will love you" (Sura iii. 29). The plain sense of this is rejected because of a principle that there is nothing in God which is contingent and the plain sense would imply this, but it is not rejected because of the principle which the New Testament affirms, "We love Him because He first loved us."

In the Old Testament the combined ideas expressed by the words *ḥēn* and *ḥesed* result in a conception of God which infinitely surpasses that found in the Qur'ān. The former does justice to the pity and kindness to which no claim can be made and thus preserves the freedom and prerogative of God, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy" (Exod. xxxiii. 19), and in the latter there is the honouring of a bond which is hallowed by

the faithfulness of God to Himself. This beautiful word belongs to the sphere of hospitality and sanctuary, access, truce and aid. There is sometimes a suggestion of confederation between equals, and mutuality is very clearly present so that G. A. Smith's translation "leal love" is warranted, but when a superior and an inferior are involved, as in the case between God and man, a mutual bargaining for benefits is not implied. There is mutuality in the relation, but not mutuality in the contribution which is made. The forgiven presents the forgiver with the opportunity to forgive, but the Forgiver gains by what He Himself does and the forgiven gains by that act too. The covenant of an Arab chief to one who is granted access or sanctuary is not capricious. It depends on what is expected of the character of a chief, an unwritten law of the desert. If he will not grant access, he forfeits the character of a worthy chief and becomes a brigand, but if he gives access he loses nothing when the one who is granted asylum offends the laws of hospitality. That man has cut himself off. Now generosity (*hēn*) will dictate that the man be escorted to a certain limit and left to his own devices with the parting word "Let me see thy face no more." Such generosity will be extolled and the man will be called merciful, but he has no obligation upon him to perform the act of generosity and he might be exonerated for putting to death the violator of the laws of hospitality, or even extolled as just.<sup>1</sup> Thus the *hesed* of God is His fidelity to His nature in the exercise of grace through a covenant of which He alone is the guarantor. He spreads the table in the midst of foes and all that flee to Him find refuge. Thus with its own background the Arabic Qur'ān might have found symbols of a fellowship which involved nothing derogatory to God and at one and the same time magnified His righteousness and loving-kindness.

One almost feels that an apology is due for introducing the foregoing analysis of Quranic teaching, seeing that this is not as yet formulated theology and represents the material available rather than any coherent system of thought relating to redemptive attributes or the activity of God in grace, mercy, and pardon. Our excuse for the inclusion of this material is that it is so often lost sight of both by Muslim theologians and also by those who write on the Muslim doctrine of God from a critical point of view. But the latter have only followed the lead given in Muslim theology, which has summarised the doctrine of God in the seven attributes.<sup>2</sup>

#### (v) THE MU'TAZILITE AND OTHER SECTARIAN VIEWS

Al' Ash'arī<sup>3</sup> says that the majority of the Mu'tazilites believed that there was not among the objects determined by Allah a grace which if

<sup>1</sup> See Lofthouse: *Hēn and Hesed in the Old Testament* in *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* (1933), Heft i. p. 29 ff.

<sup>2</sup> For other notes on Quranic Doctrine *vide supra*, Vol. I, p. 17 ff.  
<sup>3</sup> *Maqālāt*, i. 247.

He were to exercise it towards anyone who did not believe he would believe. Allah has no such grace by which, if He were to act or refrain from acting, it could be said that He determines or does not determine a man's faith. Allah acts towards none of His servants in any way other than what is most salutary for him in his religion, and constrains or urges all of them to act in accord with His commandments, withholding nothing from him which he needs in order to discharge his obligations to Him. When this takes place a man renders the obedience which entitles him to the reward promised him. But man is free to choose. When the Mu'tazilites were asked whether it is in God's power to do something for His servants which is better than what he actually does, they replied that there was no end to the good things which God could do, but if the enquiry meant to suggest that God has power to do something even better for His servants and has omitted to do it although He knows that they have need of it to discharge their obligation to Him, then it may be replied that it is inconceivable that there should be anything beyond the best that can be done for them and, presumably, God will go to the limit to assist man.

This seems to suggest that the Mu'tazilites took up the Pelagian position, denying supernatural grace or a grace given to particular individuals according to the divine foreordination. All God's servants are treated alike in that His action is always to be described as "what is most salutary for them in their religion". Similarly in those who did not take up precisely the same attitude to the question as those whom Al Ash'arī describes, it is implied that man can exercise his ability to respond in obedience to God by natural human endowment, e.g., Bishr b. Mu'tamir, who held that there is Grace with Allah, believed that those people who had never heard of the revelation could guide their lives by the light of natural law.

Al Ash'arī<sup>1</sup> says of this man that he believed that Allah has grace, and if He exercises it to anyone who He knows is not believing then he comes to believe, but it is not incumbent on Allah to do this. If Allah so exercises His grace, and men believe by it, then they are entitled to that reward for faith exercised by its aid to which they would be entitled if they believed without it. Bishr also said that it was not incumbent upon Allah to do everything that was most salutary or useful for His servants because there was no limit to what He could do in this way, but it was due from Him that He should do what was of utility in the discharge of religious obligation and to remove the causes of need in this particular respect. Ja'far b. Harb was also a believer in grace. According to Al Ash'arī he made it clear that the one upon whom the grace of God was exercised responded with voluntary faith.<sup>2</sup> It seems to have been the objection to Bishr's doctrine

<sup>1</sup> *Maqālāt*, i. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 246 f.

by the rest of the Mu'tazilites that such a view of God's grace overrides the freedom of man and makes him a believer involuntarily. It is in this way that Baghdādī interprets the Qadarite objection and their condemnation of Bishr.<sup>1</sup> Ja'far b. Ḥarb also declared that what a man did by the grace of God did not entitle him to any reward which he would have had if he had believed without this special aid. As to his definition of what was "most salutary", this could only be described as what Allah does for them, because God only particularizes the most eminent and meritorious of His servants.

The objection of Jubbā'i was that Allah could not be said to have grace which could be described as power to cause someone to believe who in the divine knowledge does not believe. Allah always does what is most useful for men in their religious need, but if there is something which He knows would be good for them and He does not do it then it must be that He intends their corruption. It is not that He has no power to do something to His servants which, if He did it, would increase their obedience and augment their reward. Such an act, however, is not obligatory upon Him and, furthermore, if He omitted to do such a thing, He could not be charged with acting futilely in summoning men to believe.

As already indicated, a great deal which is apposite to this subject must be discussed under the doctrine of God's justice and predestination. Much depends on the view taken of human freedom. Generally speaking, it seems that the Mu'tazilites, for all the negations which they applied to the divine nature, were feeling that there were certain acts which must necessarily be attributed to God. If God is wise He must act wisely. If He is wise He will act in the best way (*maṣlaha*).<sup>2</sup> Further, if He is just then He acts equally towards all and no special grace can be claimed to be shown by Him to any person. All this is in the mood of Pelagius. Moreover, His grace no more than His will can be considered as overriding man's freewill.

The subject has always been found a difficult one in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It was felt in these early times that if God's acts were directed to a final cause, in some way or other God would be dependent on what could be contributed to His being by something outside Himself and to which His acts were directed. Shahrastānī states categorically that the orthodox position was that no final cause prompted the divine action in creation because He could not profit or suffer loss from anything and neither is there anything which can constrain Him to create for the good of the creature.<sup>3</sup> Later it was to be pointed out that God was His own final end and for His own sake, i.e., for what He really is, His acts are directed in grace and righteous-

<sup>1</sup> Baghdādī : *Al Farg baina'l Firaq*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>2</sup> Shahrastānī : *Mīlāl* (Cureton), p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Shahrastānī : *Nihāyat ul Iqdām fī 'Ilmi 'l Kalām*, Cap. XVIII.

ness, but now it is just said that "His activity is the cause of everything and His activity has no cause". This is a matter which will have to be dealt with in full when we come to the final reconstructive and critical section of this study. It is one of fundamental importance.

The Mu'tazilites admitted the point that God could not find profit or receive benefit for Himself, this implying a lack of perfection in Him, but they were strongly inclined to say that every wise act must have utility, and so they considered that the utility was to the creature and not to the Creator.

In this discussion we come across a new set of terms different from those which we have noted in the Quranic teaching. Grace is now described as *lutf*, whereas this is not the Quranic term. The word we have translated "grace" in the passages from the Qur'ān quoted above is *fadl*. It would be interesting to know what led to the change in the term. *Lutf* is thus defined : "It is the act which draws the servant to obedience and removes him from disobedience in the sense that he is not forced to submission, which is compulsion, as, e.g., the sending of prophets. For we assuredly know that by them a man is near to obedience and further from disobedience. The Shi'ite and Mu'tazilite sects consider grace to be incumbent upon Allah (*sic*) by which they mean that it is incumbent upon Him not to do anything unworthy or evil. . . . But as to *lutf*, *tawfiq* and *'isma*, according to us (i.e., the Sunnis), this creates the power of obedience and *khidhlān* the power of disobedience." The definition of *'isma* is that it is a power preventing the committing of sin. *Tawfiq* is the grace to attain to what is obligatory and *khidhlān* is the hindrance to this attainment, while *'isma* implies the effectiveness of grace. That is to say, *khidhlān* prevents obedience and *'isma* prevents disobedience. All these may be equally described as acts of Allah.<sup>1</sup>

There is slight evidence of an idea that grace may be conceived as of universal application, but when the thought is approached, the orthodox hasten to reject it. Baghdādi goes even so far as to say that the Mu'tazilites, with the exception of Bishr, affirm that Allah is only a friend to a man when he is in a state of obedience, and that He is an enemy to the unbeliever only in the state of unbelief, and that if a believer were to become an unbeliever Allah would become his enemy after being his friend. Baghdādi seems to caricature Bishr's doctrine when he says that he believed that Allah is not a friend to the believer in the state of his belief nor an enemy to an unbeliever in the state of his unbelief. At any rate, it seems most likely that Bishr held that "friendship" was not dependent on the object, but was an essential quality of the Subject, God, and this is not far from the truth.<sup>2</sup> That Bishr did not allow such a view to lead him to an idea of God which

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Kashshāf (Dictionary of Technical Terms)*, p. 1299.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Al Fara' baina'l Firaq*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

would be unworthy of His righteousness seems further to be indicated by what Bağdādī describes as his third heresy.<sup>1</sup> He was asked, "If an unbeliever was converted and then drank wine without considering it lawful to do so and were to die before he had repented of his drinking, would Allah punish him on the last day for an unbelief from which he had repented ?" He replied, "Yes." They said to him, "Then it is proper for Allah to punish the people of the community with the punishment of the unbelievers ?" He answered, "Yes." This was in accordance with his idea that after God had forgiven a man, if he sinned again God could rescind the forgiveness and punish him for what he had done before his forgiveness. As expressed in Bağdādī and in *Kitāb ul Intiṣār*, this does not command itself, but if the idea underlying is that repentance is not simply the formal expression of sorrow but must be accompanied by amendment, and if the amendment is not in evidence then the man cannot be said to have repented truly nor God to have forgiven him, then again the truth may lie with Bishr, and we may have evidence of a strong ethical tendency in his doctrine, which, taken in conjunction with his ideas about grace, would show some degree of Christian influence. The combination of resistance to the idea that the forgiveness of God should not lead to presumption in sin and the assertion of grace seems to us to be significant.

#### (vi) CONCLUSIONS

It is extremely difficult to construct a consistent and homogeneous account from the materials we have before us. On the one hand, there is the insistence on the absolute and unconditioned will of God and on the other, the frequent suggestion that there is some intrinsic worth in man or in his obedience which wins the divine favour and forgiveness. Thus, God is friendly to the obedient, loves the good, accepts the righteous, forgives as a reward. But He is not *bound* to be friendly to the obedient, nor to love the good, nor to accept the righteous. This conclusion the ultra-orthodox have not scrupled to state explicitly, especially those of the Ash'arite school. Generally speaking, the conception of grace is held closely in relation to law. In this respect we might see a parallel with Tertullian and also point to the obscuration of the Pauline doctrine of grace from quite an early date in Christianity. Forgiveness is in relation to works and merit and there are grades of merit. God is good, of course, to take the trouble to reward merit. But the Ash'arites would not even come to the level of Tertullian,<sup>2</sup> who would at least assert that it was incumbent upon God to pardon men when they did certain things or fulfilled certain conditions. This, however, the Ash'arites would hesitate to admit, and would prefer to say that there was nothing obligatory upon God. There is no doubt that

<sup>1</sup> *Kitāb ul Intiṣār*, p. 63. f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Adv. Marcionem*, i. 23-27.

the sub-Christian doctrine that fellowship with God is on the basis of holiness is in the background always when we look at the Muslim doctrine but, at least, the Christian would be able to use the term "fellowship".<sup>1</sup> Such a term is, however, completely alien to the group of ideas with which we are presented in Islam.

Before the advent of Islam there had been a reversion to legalistic conceptions, and it was not uncommon to find that Christianity was described as the New Law. This was in contrast to the old Law of the Mosaic dispensation. Judaism had already prepared for the conception of grace in relation to a legal system. The very fact that the law had been given was an example of God's grace, it marked the peculiar election of the Jews. It was in the law that they found the mediation of the divine rule or theocracy. The same ideas are prominent in Islam. When the question of grace is being discussed the very tangible mission of the prophet is advanced as evidence for it. The perfection of the *shari'a* is also the signal instance of the divine favour, and the *shari'a* is that which causes the will of God to be done on earth as it is in heaven. The prophets of Israel had honoured the law and did not consider it possible for it to be superseded (cf. Jer. xi. 1-8). Even when they seem to be speaking strongly against rites prescribed in the law, it is because these had come to be regarded as merely external observances (see Joel ii. 13; Amos v. 21; Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6 ff.; Isa. i. 12, etc.). Their zeal was directed to the internalizing of the law. The Qur'ân gives some evidence of the same sort of tendency to internalize, but this is only in the early Meccan suras and the later suras of Medina are purely legal. Grace applied to these rules is, therefore, in the nature of concession and "making it easy". Such indulgence ensures that the law will be obeyed not by raising man to a higher standard, but by the slackening of obligation.

In regard to merits winning indulgence or works earning forgiveness, there is no lack of illustration of such ideas in the early Christian writers. The legalism which preceded the great schism and the invention of new legalisms in Christianity make a sad tale. In both Barnabas (xix. 10) and Polycarp (x. 2) we can find the idea of almsgiving as a ransom for sin. The penances of man may make him a favourite with God. And human pride can find a difficulty in the conception of a God who shows favour to those who are without merit. Paul faces that difficulty in Rom. xi. 11 when he speaks of the election of those who had done neither good nor ill. Philo<sup>2</sup> is puzzled about the same problem in relation to Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham and many others. He can only think that there is some intrinsic worth in these men which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gregory of Nyssa: *De infantibus qui premature abripiuntur* (Migne: *Patrol. Grac.*, xlvi, 173D and 176A) and also *De anima et resurrectione* in the same volume, p. 89AB.

<sup>2</sup> For instance in *Leg. All.*, iii. 21-34 (i. 100-108).

distinguishes them in the eyes of God. And how true it is to say that God responds to prayer and to the lofty aspirations of the soul and to the love of the beautiful ! Yet how false it is when the grace of God is made to depend on the worth of the creature ! For the worth of the creature is the ideal worth which only God can put upon him. But man is so prone to consider that he can earn his way with God that whether Jew or Muslim or Christian he has turned aside from the thought that God is in him to will and to do and that God is all in all and so the unmotivated grace of God is obscured and dimmed. The Muslim seeks the restitution of God to His rightful place by the magnification of the Sovereign Will, but the Christian finds the solution in the revelation of the Sovereign Grace. Because Paul has the revelation of the gift of God in Christ he can face the problem with the profoundest spiritual insight and with the key to unlock the mystery. "His nature and His name is Love." So John also as he recognizes the initiative of the divine grace and the essential love which is the fount of all love.

#### C. MEDIATION

Mediation can be focused in Christianity but not in Islam, and therefore it has to be divided, as it were, into two activities, one being the procession from the divine side and the other the acquisition from the human side exemplified in Muslim dogmatic by the descent of Gabriel and the state of *Wahī* in the prophet. In Christianity the Incarnation is the focal point and the activity may be taken in at one glance both in its human and divine references in the person of Christ.

To refer to Al *Ghazzālī* is really to anticipate, but by way of illustration we may point to the elaborate scheme in the *Iḥyā*. In this scheme we have a series of steps in the phenomenal or manifestational plane with correspondences in the transcendent realm. Thus we pass back from acts which proceed from the hand through a long chain which reaches back to what is supreme in man, namely, reason ; then step by step there is a transcendent series corresponding to the stages in the world of manifestation until we come to his conclusion that the sole actor is God.

"A wayfarer who had the Light of God for a torch saw a piece of paper the surface of which had been blackened with ink. Said he, 'Your face was white as wool ; why have you blackened it ?' The paper made answer 'What an injustice that you should ask me such a question ! I did not blacken myself. Inquire of the ink, for it was sitting in the inkpot where it dwells and it suddenly made a violent assault on my surface.' Said he, 'You are right.' Then he made inquiry of the ink, 'What is the reason why you blackened the face of the paper ?' The ink replied, 'Why ask me ? I was sitting quietly in the ink pot and had no intention of leaving it at all, but the pen

forced me to its wicked design, exiled me from my home and scattered my company all over this page . . . but why labour the obvious ? You should ask the pen. . . . ' The pen said, ' I was a reed standing among the green trees on the river bank. The hand came with a knife and, pulling me up by the roots, stripped me of bark, tore my clothes, cut me in pieces and then pared me and split my head to fashion my point for writing. Then it dipped me in the ink and exacts service from me, moving me along on my head. Why then do you question me and thus rub salt into my wounds ? Go away ; inquire of the hand.' " When the hand is questioned it points out that it is only flesh and blood, and asks its interlocutor whether a mere thing of flesh and blood could be capable of injustice or whether a body could move of itself ? The inquiry should be directed to " Power " for " I am only a steed on which a rider named ' Power ' (*qudra*) is mounted. . . . In form and shape there is no difference between me and the hand of the dead." When " Power," is asked it refers to Will (*irāda*) which directs the attention to Knowledge and Intellect at whose behest the will is set to stir up power. Intellect excuses itself on the grounds that it is only a lamp which is not alight by itself but lit by someone else ; and the heart replies that it is only a tablet ; and Knowledge avers that it is only a mark graven on the whiteness of the heart after the illumination of the lamp of Reason and so the question should be asked of the Pen which made this mark. Bewildered at this return to the Pen, the wayfarer is instructed further by Knowledge. There are three worlds, the world of phenomena or manifestation ('ālam *ush shahāda*), the world of angels ('ālam *ul malakīt*) and the world of powers ('ālam *ul jabarīt*). The second Pen is in the world of angels.<sup>1</sup> Thus from the phenomenal world we pass to the transcendent world until the conclusion is reached that the sole Actor is God.

It should be clear that when considering the question of mediation we have to consider on the divine side, theories of emanation, angelology and ideas of the Logos which pertain to the Godward side of reality, and on the human side, the doctrine of prophecy and prophets, the symptoms of *wahī*, man as the microcosm, grades of humanity and schemes of ascent up to the divine. The general effect is to present a transcendent God, a super-terrestrial hierarchy, and a world of manifestation in which the prophet stands supreme. There is a trinity here which is rendered unnecessary on the Christian side by the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. It is very questionable whether the Muslim system saves the divine Unity as completely as the Christian conception.

We may summarize thus : Mediation may be taken on the Godward side in relation to ideas which may be roughly described as emanational,

<sup>1</sup> *Ihyā 'Ulūm id Dīn* (Cairo ed.), Vol. IV, 213 f. The passage has been interpreted according to Indian exegesis.

or in some cases manifestational. The former is not always to be applied in the strict sense of an evolution of the divine. On the human side, broadly speaking, the subject can be discussed under the doctrine of prophethood.

The very fact of creation implies that there is some relation between God and the universe, and while God has been proclaimed as utterly transcendent it is not long before this theory breaks down under the pressure of the need for an ontology which seeks an origin for being in God, as much as under compulsion from the claims of religion. In some way God and the world or God and man must be linked. How can this idea be approached? Various possibilities suggest themselves. There may be beings intermediate between God and man, couriers, messengers, members of the court of the Heavenly King who deigns not to have any traffic with the lower orders who yet need His government and provision. There may be proclamations issued from that court, whereby its laws and provisions, its likes and dislikes, hints of its magnificence, scraps from its table, tags of its wisdom, come to inquisitive creatures of the lower world. Some of the lower orders may have been admitted for a moment or two into the presence and, blinded by too much splendour, brought away to earth incoherent stories of what their confused mind has perceived. Some may even have been admitted as favourites into that court and had traffic with angels or seen eternity in a globe of light. Or it might be thought that the King comes in His own person although in a form which could be recognized by the feeble intellect of man. Angels, scriptures, contemplatives, prophets, manifestations, emanations, incarnations, all these have been at some time or other suggested as providing such mediation between the Most High and humanity as would provide sufficient ground for religion.

If the Most High is utterly transcendent religion is impossible. Although sometimes we speak of certain religions asserting the utter transcendence, there is always an inconsistency which opens the veil of relatedness. It is first of all in the realm of this inconsistency that we see the rise of ideas of mediation. It is a most remarkable fact that the mediation of angels and the doctrine of emanations and the rest, ostensibly to bring God nearer to man, have been the instrument whereby it has been sought to preserve the transcendence of God. Seeing that the Absolute is to be preserved by an elaboration of the links of relatedness, how can one regard such theories as anything else but paradoxical?

It will be seen that the theories of emanation have arisen in an attempted solution of a problem which has been created by those who now seek some way out of the difficulty. Firstly, God has been thrust into utter unrelatedness, and then, finding that certain facts cannot be squared with such an idea, it is sought to explain them in some way

without relinquishing the prior assumption. A parallel to this difficulty may be seen in the theories to account for the world of multiplicity in face of the postulate that the fount and origin of multiplicity is the undifferentiated One, purely simple and incapable of division.

Next among the difficulties is the thought of the world as it is with all its imperfections, and how such a world can be considered as the work of a perfect being? Mediation is designed in relation to this set of facts to keep God pure. To the intermediaries are relegated tasks which are deemed unworthy of God. But the fact of the matter is that this cannot possibly be a solution to the difficulty. *Qui facit per alium facit per se.*

No system emphasizes transcendence more than Neoplatonism. It explicitly places the One above and beyond being. Yet it is in this very system that we find the scheme of emanation most thoroughly developed. Is not this a sign that in such theories the interest is not so much to bring God near to man as to thrust Him further away and to keep Him from defiling contact with this evil world?

The ontology which is the primary interest of these theories of emanation comes perilously near to making finiteness the measure of evil. True, the emanation of being is from the Good, but the outgoing of being is a constant fall. The way of salvation is the way of ascent. This obscures the fact that the outpouring of the divine is redemptive from first to last, that the conferring of finitude upon beings is the initiation of the process of salvation, that from the first God looks upon what has been generated and pronounces it good. Here in systems other than the Christian we have the descent from the divine to the lower, and the "rebellious activity of souls" accounts for the inferior being that characterizes this lower world, and the outgoing of God only remotely results in a rebound when the lowest has been reached. The One overflows to give existence, and this is Its goodness, but the return to the One is the ascent to emancipation from being. The being is from the goodness; then to what is the *emancipation* from being to be referred?

#### (I) THE POWERS

The most thoroughgoing exponent of the doctrine of powers is Philo. He brings his exposition of Judaism into relation with Greek thought by conceiving the intermediaries as powers which are identical with the *logoi* of the Stoics,<sup>1</sup> the Platonist ideas,<sup>2</sup> God's thoughts, the heavenly patterns or models of things on earth,<sup>3</sup> sphragides, i.e., types which imprint on matter as seals<sup>4</sup> giving it life, reality and durability.

<sup>1</sup> *Sacrificant* 13 (II, 261 ff.), cf. also *Post. Cain*, 6 (I, 229), *Somn.*, i. 12 (I, 631), and *Conf. Ling.*, 34 (I, 431).

<sup>2</sup> *Monarch.*, i. 6 (II, 219).

<sup>3</sup> *Mundi Op.*, iv. 5 (I, 4).

<sup>4</sup> *Mutat. Nom.*, 23 (I. 598).

Sometimes they seem to have some kinship with Form which in Aristotelian theory is impressed on Matter.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes they are conceived as angels<sup>2</sup> and spoken of as incorporeal. These powers are invisible bonds of symmetry and unity.<sup>3</sup> "God being one has about Him an unspeakable number of powers."<sup>4</sup> They are even said to be infinite. When God said, "Let us make man", He addressed these powers.

Creation and providence are the work of these powers. They are immaterial, but they act upon material things.<sup>5</sup> By them characterless matter receives its character or quality and in their operation is to be found the source of the individuation of things. The four elements are conceived as powers and in this connexion it is interesting to note that the series of emanations in the philosophy of Ibn Sīnā ends with the four elements.

The powers are not subject to change or time. They are not known in their essence but only in their effects. Their operation is directed by purpose and providence, and therefore they do not act blindly. God's will is expressed by their agency and His mind revealed through them. They are inerrant in their working. It is very important to note this because of the inquiry which is continually being raised : at what stage does viciousness enter into this downward thrust of ontological devolution ? At this stage there is no hint of it, but the powers perform their tasks with complete competence and are fully equipped for such tasks as are allotted to them. There is some difficulty in settling the question as to whether they are free in any way. They seem to act according to the will of God, but at the same time to have a sort of relative independence. The former characteristic of their operation is conceived as necessary if they are to be in any way evidence for the divine purpose ; the latter characteristic is so that the divine may be exonerated from things which might be regarded as blameworthy.

In particular the hierarchy of powers<sup>6</sup> consists of the following : First and foremost is the Logos with which we shall have to deal more fully later. This is followed by the Creative, Regal and Propitious Powers, then the two divisions of the Legislative Power, namely the preceptive and the prohibitory. These are the five Cherubim which represent God's goodness and authority. The Most High is pure benevolence, and on this account no infliction of penalty or act of justice can be directly attributed to Him. It is the Power of Justice which is the executive in such acts. It will be seen that the powers are here conceived as separate from God. "God generated all things,

<sup>1</sup> See Drummond : *Philo Judeus*, ii. 75.

<sup>2</sup> *Past. Cain*, 25-26 (I, 241-42).

<sup>3</sup> *Migrat. Abrab.*, 39 (I, 471).

<sup>4</sup> *SS. Ab. et Cain*, 15 (I, 173).

<sup>5</sup> *Sacrificant*, 13 (II, 261).

<sup>6</sup> See *De Prof.* 18-19 (I, 560-61).

not touching (matter) Himself, for it was not right for the Wise and Blessed to come into contact with indeterminate and mixed matter; but He used the incorporeal powers, whose real name is ideas, that the fitting form might take possession of each genus”<sup>1</sup> . . . “If the powers were employed to do something which it was not suitable for God to do Himself, what can be plainer than that they and God are essentially distinct.”<sup>2</sup> Yet Philo is loath to part utterly from conceptions of the immanence of God. “God has embosomed all things, and permeated the parts of the universe.”<sup>3</sup> Drummond considers that Philo is making a distinction between dynamic and essential immanence, that God is conceived by him to be near dynamically and remote essentially.<sup>4</sup> Generally speaking, such a differentiation would hold valid for the Islamic thought. There is, however, this very important difference. In Philo we have a multiplicity of powers and they are semi-personalized, whereas in Islam we see the unification of powers in Power (*Qadar*). In the latter the semi-personal is rejected and attributes are substituted. It is sometimes argued against the interpretation of Philo that his system of powers as intermediaries leaves God in His lone transcendence and also that in Philo’s teaching the powers are simply attributes of God. But if this were the case what becomes of the relative independence of the powers which Philo is anxious to maintain in order to preserve the purity of God from contact with matter? Was it because there was some idea that the attributes semi-personalized might have a semi-independence from God, like that which prompted so much of the argument about the attributes in the early days of Islam? Was it that the Names of God in Islam had come to be regarded in a Philonic manner as the agents of God in His activity, by which He exercised knowledge, power, will, etc.? This is not at all impossible, and there may have been a desire to avoid the dangers which might ensue from such a conception.

We have to say that there is some ambiguity and that the problem of whether these powers are really attributes of God poetically conceived cannot be solved to our perfect satisfaction. It is always possible that these powers of Philo are “phases of action or aspects of the divine activity” and not separate and derived beings. There is much value in poetical and concrete representation of the divine activity. However, as we find these matters expressed in Philo, it is not illegitimate to see in the manner of the expression such a degree of differentiation from the divine essence that these powers may be classed with emanations. It should also be noted that there is a clear and explicit diversity of attribution, e.g., Justice is referred to a power and not to

<sup>1</sup> *Sacrific.*, 13 (II, 261).

<sup>2</sup> Drummond: *Philo Judæus*, ii. 113.

<sup>3</sup> *Conf. Ling.*, 27 (I, 425).

<sup>4</sup> Drummond: *op. cit.*, pp. 109–10.

God Himself. In this regard there is something else which might be said. Even those who have not conceived the divine attributes as separate powers have fallen into the trap of attributing something to one attribute of God and something else to another attribute and have considered that this is the way to explain seemingly contradictory things. It is not always sufficiently recognized that when two contradictory things are referred to different attributes, the final attribution of such contradictions must be to God. Thus, e.g., in Islam we find that it is quite common for something to be attributed to God's will and not to His command, or something to His permission and not to His will. Or it may be that something is attributed to the divine justice and not to the divine love. Can there be such distinct attribution? What we refer to one attribute is surely by abstraction and analysis and cannot mean that we are not attributing the same to God Himself. What we refer to one attribute should not be so altogether distinct and contradictory to what we refer to another attribute as to give an impression of the attributes as separate entities apart from God or to reduce God Himself to chaos and disharmony. We must say, e.g., that all that God does is done in wisdom, love and purpose. We cannot get out of a difficulty by saying that such and such an act is to be referred to God's will, for what is God's will apart from Himself? We cannot say that such and such an act may be attributed to the divine justice as if the divine justice were something unrelated to the divine love. We cannot say that the divine wisdom is shown in such and such a thing and thus escape from the idea that the whole character of God is in all His acts. Reference to attributes is a convenience which may become a menace if we cease to realize that the ultimate reference is to God Himself. It will also be clear that powers postulated as the intermediaries of God's action are in significant contrast to attributes which affirm and explain the immediacy of God's action. Orthodox Islam falters here when it refuses to identify the attributes with God's essence.

Sometimes the Powers are represented as Angels, though for the most part they seem to be regarded as superior to the angels. This is shown in the illustration we have taken from Al Ghazzālī. The most significant suggestion of the differentiation of the Powers is, perhaps, to be found in Philo's exposition of the story of the three angels who visited Abraham. The central figure is the Father and beside Him there are the Creative and Regal Powers. Another similar differentiation is to be found in the Philonic doctrine of the Glory of the Lord. God in His essential nature does not move from place to place; He cannot be localized in such a way. It is not the Lord but the Glory of the Lord which appears to Moses. While God may not be found in time or space, the Glory of the Lord may be, and, as such, is not the immediate revelation of God but a mediate manifestation. This has

its counterpart in the manifestational theory found at an early date in the Muslim mystics and expressed by the term "*tajallī*". "*Tajallī*, Manifestation, consists in the docetic theory that the Ultimate Being, because it is overpowering Light, would blind the eyes of creatures if it were to appear unveiled ; it must therefore when appearing (*zāhir*) put on a veil. . . . The picture of God in the burning bush is a favourite one and a good example of this docetism. In this doctrine God is at the same time hidden (*bātin*) and visible (*zāhir*). . . . Here, however, no parts issue or flow forth out of God as the Philosophy of Emanation expresses it."<sup>1</sup> Horten, whom we have just quoted, speaks of this manifestational conception as an idea of the "extension of God's being". It should be noted, however, that there are passages in these early writers which indicate that it was not difficult to pass from ideas of emanation to ideas of manifestation, and it is possible that we might see more of the idea of emanation in the Philonic Logos doctrine and more of the conception of manifestation in Philo's doctrine of powers and the Glory of the Lord.

Before passing from this review it would be well to refer briefly to the Gnostic theory of *aions*. This term was used to signify "infinites" contrasted with those things which are subject to time and change. The *aions* are a heavenly race, superior to man. Whether they should be regarded as emanations or not depends on the particular Gnostic system in question, but in all the systems they are considered to be intermediaries. Later Muslim thought has its '*ayān thābita*', immutable concepts which, however, are not personified, so far as we have learned. But these in some respects remind us of the Gnostic *aions*.

## (II) ANGELS

Mediation by angels is, of course, a common notion in the Qur'ān.<sup>2</sup> The Qur'ān itself is given by an angel.<sup>3</sup> Intercession of angels is a familiar idea though it is not always countenanced.<sup>4</sup> The Qur'ān speaks of the Angel of Death.<sup>5</sup> Gabriel is dignified especially as "the Spirit". In Sura xxvi. 193–5 he is declared to be the "faithful spirit" and in Sura xix. 17 he is "our spirit" who was sent to Maryam. He is identified in Sura xvi. 104 with the Holy Spirit. He is the agent in revelation and brings divine communications to the Prophet. His work in support of the prophets is also shown by the fact that he strengthens Jesus (Sura ii. 81, etc.). The differentiation between "the angels and the spirit" (*rūh*)<sup>6</sup> may indicate that he is to

<sup>1</sup> *Indische Strömungen in der islamischen Mystik*, II, p. 11 f.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. I, pp. 22 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See Sura, ii. 91–92 and lxvi. 4. Cf. also Suras vi. 8–9; xi. 15 and 33; xvii. 97; xxv. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Sura, liii. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Sura xxxii. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Suras lxx. 4; lxxxviii. 38; xcvi. 4.

be distinguished as the leader of the angels, though there are diverse interpretations of the passages which contain such expressions, Baidāwī even suggesting that *Rūh* is a creation superior to the angels. We have already dealt quite fully with the angelology of the Qur'ān and so need not repeat what has been said. If Baidāwī is right in his explanation of the term *al muqarrabūn*, the "brought nigh",<sup>1</sup> we have a Quranic reference to the Cherubim (*karribyūn*).<sup>2</sup>

In Suras xxxvii. 8 and xxxviii. 69 we have mention of the heavenly hosts (*al mala' ul a'lā*).

Abu'l Muntahā, commenting on *Al Fiqh ul Akbar*, represents the orthodox view when he says, "The angels are subtle bodies which have the ability to assume various forms. One group is in attendance on God and one group mediates between heaven and earth." This latter group carries the divine decrees into operation. 'Ali ul Qārī declares that the angels are preserved from sin. They are never disobedient. This reminds us of the inerrancy of Philo's Powers. The same writer says that the angels have no sex, but this seems to conflict with the story of Hārūt and Mārūt. Baghdādī discusses the question as to whether the Prophets are superior to the angels, and accepts the affirmative. The Mu'tazilites and the Philosophers usually assert that the angels are superior to prophets, but the dogmatic statement, based on the story of the command to the angels to worship Adam, is that angels are inferior to men. Al Asamm, who is not considered orthodox, held that angels who had committed minor sins were inferior to prophets. This conflicts with the general assumption of the impeccability of the angels. In this connexion we must repeat the observation that if the angels are impeccable this seems to render the primary reason for their introduction as intermediaries null and void. They were brought in to detach the evil in nature from the immediate operation of God. Having established the impeccability of the angels, there is now the need to introduce evil spirits or devils to be the agents in evil. But these agents of evil are not conceived as the authors of evil.

The angels are spoken of as being "sent" (*ba'atha, inbi'āth*). They are a substitute for the direct providential working of God just as the Philonic Powers. Islam does not separate the powers, but it does multiply the angelic ministers. In God's work for the individual as well as in general providence angels are the ministers. So we find guardian angels and recording angels, Munkar and Nakir.

It will be seen from the following quotations from John of Damascus<sup>3</sup> how closely the doctrine of angels in Islam approximates to the Christian ideas.

<sup>1</sup> Sura iv. 170. Cf. also Sura xxi, 20. Jesus is also called *mugarrab* (Sura iii. 40).

<sup>2</sup> On Sura, iv. 170.

<sup>3</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. II, Cap. III (P.G., 94, 865 ff.).

" God Himself is the Maker and Creator of the angels ; He brought them into being out of nothing and created them after His own image, an incorporeal race, a sort of spirit or immaterial fire. . . . ' He maketh His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire ' . . . and he (David) has described their lightness and their ardour, and the keenness and sharpness with which they hunger for God and serve Him . . .

" An angel therefore is an intelligent essence, in perpetual motion, having freewill, incorporeal, ministering to God, having obtained by grace an immortal nature. The Creator alone knows the form and definition of its essence. All that we can understand is that it is incorporeal and immaterial, though all that is compared with God . . . we find to be dense and material : for in actual fact it is only the Deity who is immaterial and incorporeal.

" It is not susceptible to repentance because it is incorporeal, for it is owing to the weakness of the flesh that man comes to have repentance. . . . It is immortal not by nature but by grace.

" They are secondary intellectual lights derived from that first light which is without beginning, for they have the power of illumination ; they have no need for tongue or for hearing but without uttering words they communicate to each other their thoughts and counsels. They are circumscribed ; for when they are in the Heaven they are not on earth, and when they are sent down to earth they do not remain in Heaven. . . . It is not as they really are that they reveal themselves to men . . . but in a changed form which beholders are capable of seeing. . . . They have no need for marriage. . . . They are present in whatever place they are assigned to in the manner of mind and energy and they cannot be present and energize in various places at the same time.

" Whether they are equal to or different from one another in essence we do not know. They do differ from one another, however, in brightness and position. . . . They excel one another in rank and nature and obviously the brighter share their brightness and knowledge with the lower.

" They are mighty and prompt to fulfil the will of God and their nature is endowed with such celerity that they are instantly found wherever the divine glance directs them. They are guardians of the divisions of the earth ; set over nations and regions which are allotted to them by their Maker. . . . With difficulty are they moved to evil yet they are not absolutely immovable. They are now altogether immovable not by nature but by grace and by their proximity to the only Good.

" They behold God according to their capacity and this is their only food. They are far above us for they are incorporeal and free from all carnal passion and yet they are not passionless ; only the Deity is passionless. . . . They take different forms at the bidding of their

Master and thus reveal themselves to men and unveil the divine mysteries to them. . . . They have one duty: to sing God's praise and to carry out His divine will."

Except in respect to their superiority to men this is in almost every detail a statement which would be acceptable to an orthodox Muslim. Ambiguity in regard to incorporeality and impeccability is also common. There is a general tendency in Islam to reject the idea that the angels are merely personifications of God's power. Thus an orthodox writer argues, "How can these be merely personifications of powers when they are described as having two, three or four pairs of wings? How can they be asked to identify people who worshipped them in the last Judgment? They are also said to worship God. This can only be said of living creatures. If they are only powers then why should they be included with Allah, the Last Day, the Book and Prophets as objects of faith?"<sup>1</sup>

Some writers also refuse to identify angels with the separate intelligences ('uqūl) although they are not averse to setting rational arguments for the separate intelligences in the same context as the discussion of the nature of angels. Thus: "There must be conformity between that which affects and that which is affected (*mu'athhir wa mu'aththar*). There can be no such relatedness between God and the world of sense or of humanity which is gross, dark and unstable, between that pure Light and this dense darkness, between that refined and subtle and this gross, between that height of sublimity and this depth, between that perpetuity and this transient, between that immortal and this mortal, between that eternal and this contingent or temporal. Thus God has created intermediaries, which conform or are related to Him on the one side, and related to the earth on the other. The further away from Him the greater the intermediaries required."<sup>2</sup> "The angels, according to the orthodox view, are not intelligences." There is a great difference between them. "They are subtle and luminous bodies who do difficult tasks and appear in various shapes. They have wings and senses. But in the opinion of the philosophers the intelligences are contingent (*mumkin*) existences which are neither body, nor state in body, nor part of body but substances (*jawhar*) which are separate (*mujarrad*). The only relation they have to body is by their influence."<sup>3</sup> "The intelligences are ten. God created one and that created another intelligence and the heaven, the second created a third and a second heaven; and in this manner there came to be ten intelligences and nine heavens and the tenth intelligence created all the individuals of the universe." This latter statement is simply descriptive of the Islamic philosophers' theory.<sup>3</sup> It will be noted that

<sup>1</sup> Najm ul Ghani : *Ta'lim ul Imān*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> Najm ul Ghani : *Ta'lim ul Imān*, p. 19 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, 21.

the Christian identified intelligences, powers, angels, Cherubim, etc., or rather gathered them together as one class. Thus John of Damascus : "There are nine orders in groups of three 1. Six-winged Seraphim, many-eyed Cherubim and those who sit in the holiest thrones. 2. Dominions, Powers, and Authorities. 3. Rulers, Archangels and Angels."<sup>1</sup> The same writer's testimony with regard to the identification with the intelligences has been quoted above. Islamic scholasticism approximates still more closely to this view than the hesitant and inconclusive orthodox Muslim statement we have mentioned.

### (III) EMANATION

As will have been seen by the translation we have made from Ibn Miskawaih, at an early date Islam became familiar with emanation theory. Some of the ideas may have had an origin in Gnosticism, some in the Hermetic eclecticism of Harrān, but the greater part bear the imprint of Neoplatonism. The following passages from Plotinus<sup>2</sup> contain most of the conceptions with which one becomes familiar in the Muslim Philosophers and Sufis in regard to the ontological unfoldment of God. "The problem endlessly debated by the most ancient philosophers is : from a unity such as we have asserted the One to be, how can any manifold, any dyad or any number come to be ? Why has the First not continued to be enfolded in Itself ? . . . It must be explained how the Divine Intellect (*nous*) comes to be : Everything which moves has necessarily an object towards which it moves, but since the Supreme cannot have an object like this, we cannot ascribe motion to it. . . . Origin from the Supreme should not be taken to imply movement. . . . That would involve the Being resulting from the movement being a third and not a second principle, for movement would be the second substance. In view of its immovability the Supreme cannot have assented, decreed or stirred in any way towards the existence of a second. What happened ? It must be a circum-radiation—produced from the Supreme unaltering, and it may be compared with the brilliant light which surrounds the sun and is continually generated from that unchanging substance . . . .

"All that is fully achieved engenders : therefore the eternally achieved engenders eternally an eternal being. At the same time the offspring is always inferior. . . . The offspring is attached by a bond of sheer necessity, separated only in being distinct. . . . There is a certain necessity that the first should have its offspring.

"The One in seeking itself has vision. That very vision is the Intellectual-Principle. . . . All there too is a unity, though a unity which is the potentiality of all existence. . . . The items of this potentiality are elicited by the divine intellection and known by it in detail.

<sup>1</sup> *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Bk. II, Cap. III (P.G., 94, 873).

<sup>2</sup> *Enneads*, V, i. 6-8.

. . . It has besides within itself a consciousness of this potency. It knows that of itself it can beget an hypostasis and can determine its own being by the virtue emanating from its Prior. . . . The offspring of the Divine Intellect is Soul." Thus the order is : from the One (the Good) proceeds the Intellectual-Principle and from the Intellectual-Principle the All-soul.

The system which Plotinus proposes is one of subordination ; it is a descent. The First (*al awwal*)<sup>1</sup> is logically the One (*al ahad* and *wāhid*) and morally the Good (*al khayr*). It is Simple (*mufarrad* or sometimes *wāhid*), Absolute (*al wujūd ul mulaq*), Transcendent ('āla), Infinite (*lā intihā* and *lā mahdūd*) and the Unconditioned (*Wājib ul Wujūd*). The One is unknowable, transcending all qualities and transcending even being. The One is not the Creator. The first engendered Principle is the Intellect (*al 'Aql*) or the Intellectual-Principle (*al 'aql ul awwal*). This is not discursive reasoning but a total and simultaneous comprehension of all reality in a sort of intuition, and as such embraces within it the sum of all ideas. In Islamic parlance it apprehends all the "reals" (*al haqā'iq*).<sup>2</sup> The Intellectual-Principle is both First Thinker and Thought. It is the first of whom it is possible to affirm existence. By its mediation alone is the Unknowable One "known". Sometimes we may refer to the Intellectual-Principle as Spirit and Mind. The three terms used in relation to Intellect are *νόος* which is Mind Itself, *νοήσις* which is Its activity (*τα'aggul*), and its object is *νοητόν* (*ma'qūl*). It is with the Intellectual-Principle that multiplicity begins : for the Intellectual-Principle is the sum of the intelligibles (*rā νοητά—ma'qūlāt*). The intellectual universe to which it pertains comprehends all particular intelligences which are images, representations or phantasms of the Primal Intellect (cf. 'ālam ul mithāl). The Third is the All-Soul (*nafs* or better : *an nafs ul kулū*). As the Intellectual-Principle comprehends all the intelligibles, the All-Soul is all the souls (*anfus*). The All-Soul is the image of the Intellect. This has two aspects, as it reverts to its superior or as it turns towards nature. In the latter aspect it is generative and fashions the material universe. By it form is impressed on matter. The function of the soul often seems to be the same as that of the *logos*, for it fashions the material universe according to the ideas. In the Neoplatonist system the Soul is the active principle of creation and providence. It mediates between mind and matter. Movement is introduced into the Plotinian system when we come to creation by soul.

Why should there ever be such a process ? It is supposed to be sufficiently accounted for by the essential activity of the divine, and this activity is paradoxically conceived as activity of the unmoved

<sup>1</sup> It seems convenient to give here certain Arabic terms used for the ideas represented. Other terms are also used, but those given are typical.

<sup>2</sup> *rā ىura*.

and unmoving. "The One engenders its consequents without movement."<sup>1</sup> This activity is the activity of the Good. Plato had said in the *Timaeus* "He was good and so He desired to impart Himself." That the source of the procession is the Good is taken up in the pre-Plotinian Alexandrians, both Origen and Clement. In the purely Islamic systems the idea is not prominent, but it finds a place in the philosophers and in the Sufistic systems; indeed, it has an important place in the latter.

Caird has well expressed some of the difficulties which arise in accepting such a system. Can "an infinite Being go beyond Itself or give rise to any creature even relatively independent of Itself"? Plotinus holds "that the Absolute One does not go beyond Itself and that Its activity, so far as we ascribe to it activity, is directed only to Itself.

. . . It is not responsible for the existence of those lower forms of being which nevertheless must be allowed to spring from it, and to owe their existence to it. But how can they exist at all if the Absolute does not realize Itself in them? Plotinus . . . is obliged to fall back on the strange supposition of an action of the Absolute which is accidental or has only an external necessity. The inexplicable law that the higher form of being always produces a lower form, though without any action directed to the lower, is used by Plotinus to account for the existence of the lower, and yet to save the higher from any responsibility for it. Hence we have a descending scale of degrees of reality, each of which produces the imperfect image of itself in that which follows it, till ultimately we are carried beyond the intelligible world into physical and moral evil. Thus God is saved from being the cause of evil by a twofold expedient: first, by the interposition of a number of intermediate beings between the highest and the lowest; and secondly, by the idea that the production of the lower is an accidental result, and not the aim or object of the activity of the higher. But it is obvious that this is no satisfactory solution of the difficulty. . . . The very idea of an accidental operation of the Absolute is self-contradictory as it implies that the Absolute in its outgoing activity is subjected to a law which is not involved in its nature as Absolute. And, in the second place, the interposition of the pure intelligence and the world-soul between the absolute One and the region of matter only distributes the problem of evil over the different grades of reality."<sup>2</sup>

Emanation is not something willed or purposed. One of the legacies of the Neoplatonist ideas was the question we often find in the later theologians as to whether God is to be considered as cause *ex necessitate naturae* (*mūjib*) or a free cause exercising power voluntarily (*qādir mūkhtār*). Some Islamic thinkers support the theory of an

<sup>1</sup> Proclus: *Elements of Theology*, Prop. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Caird: *Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*, Vol. 2, p. 329 ff.

involuntary creation or sort of evolution from the divine nature, while others consider that creation *ex nihilo* is the truth and consider such creation to be purposed. For instance, Ibn Miskawaih believes in creation *ex nihilo* and Fārābī seems to have the other idea of procession or emanation.

As a pattern of the philosophical theory of emanations found in Islam we should take Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna). He starts with the aphorism "From the One only one can proceed."<sup>1</sup> It is from matter that multiplicity derives and so matter cannot be conceived to have come directly from God. A second principle is that a necessary being which has no final cause cannot be actuated by a purpose towards something external to It. By such an assumption the inferior would necessitate something in the superior. Ibn Sīnā's scheme is as follows. The First Principle (*al awwal*) is God. From the First springs the First Intelligence (*al 'aql ul awwal*) which knows whence it sprung and its own essence. Being derived directly from the First, the First Intelligence is necessary, but in its own essence it is contingent. There is therefore a duality in the First Intelligence which there is not in First Being. From the duality in the First Intelligence arises a triplicity in the Second Intelligence. The Second Intelligence knows itself as necessary and possible, and its necessity forms the soul of the ninth sphere and its possibility the body of it. There follows the Third Intelligence which also knows itself as necessary and possible; and this necessity and possibility form the soul and body of the sphere of Saturn, i.e., the eighth sphere. The scheme proceeds in this fashion till in all there are ten intelligences and nine spheres, the last of the spheres being that of the Moon. The sphere of the Moon gives rise to the Active Intelligence (*al 'aql ul fa'āl*), whence human souls spring, and also to the four elements. With this conclusion of four elements it looks as if the "one from one" principle breaks down at this point. Ibn Sina tries to explain this by saying that there was a knowledge in the intelligences that in God's thought the elements were four in number. It will be observed that in this there is necessitation from the superior to the inferior at each stage in the descent, and correspondingly a subordination involving the contingency of each inferior. Each stage holds a triplicity of a logical character composed of the intelligence in itself, its necessity and its contingency.

It will have been observed that we have in Plotinus the term "generation" used of the relation of the Intellectual-Principle to the One.<sup>2</sup> Before Plotinus we have, in Origen's conception of mediation, the idea of the eternal generation of the Son. Plotinus echoes the note of eternity in his words, "We dare not speak of generation in time for

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Enneads*, V, iii. 15 : "A single unmanifold emanation we may very well allow but a multitudinous production raises a question."

<sup>2</sup> *Enneads*, V, i. 6-7.

we are speaking of eternal beings.”<sup>1</sup> The roots of the idea are in the *Timaeus* where God is the Father and the Cosmos is the Son. We have, on the other hand, the commonly accepted statement in the Christian writers, based on Scripture, that the Father is unbegotten or ingenerate and the Son begotten or generated. John of Damascus writes,<sup>2</sup> “We may not speak of God as devoid of natural generative power: and generative power means power to produce from oneself . . . that which is like one’s self. . . . The everlasting God generates His own Word which is perfect, without beginning, and without end. That God whose nature and existence are above Time may not engender in Time. But with man it is manifestly otherwise, for generation is with him a matter of sex and destruction and flux and growth, and body enwraps him, and he possesses a nature either male or female. For the male requires the assistance of the female. But may He who surpasses all and transcends all thought and comprehension be gracious unto us!” The Damascene goes on to say that the nature of generation and procession are quite utterly beyond our understanding. His depreciation of applying the term in the ordinary human sense reminds us that such terms are not at all in favour in Islam and that a vulgar interpretation has often been offered and rejected by Islamic critics of the doctrine of the Sonship of Christ. Protests against a carnal interpretation came from Christians long before the advent of Islam. When Origen speaks of generation he speaks of the radiance which has its source in light, the derivation of the radiance and the possibility of distinguishing the rays from their source.

Other terms used in the Plotinian scheme are “procession” and “overflowing” (*ἐκρέω* and *ἰπερρέω*). These terms are most happily accepted by the Islamic writers in the translations *sudūr* and *fayd*. In Christianity the term “procession” is used in the statement of the doctrine of the Trinity. In this connexion the Damascene writes, “The names Fatherhood, Sonship and Procession were not applied to the Holy Godhead by us: on the contrary they were communicated to us by the Godhead.”<sup>3</sup> The reference will be to passages like John xv. 26 and viii. 42, etc., where, however, a different Greek word is used from that employed by Plotinus.<sup>4</sup>

It is not unusual to find the terminology of “creation” mingled with that of “procession”. This will have been noticed in Ibn Miskawaih. Origen believed in eternal “creation” and the thought behind this seems to be of a permanent and eternal procession and the interlinking of the Creator with His creation. To this we might apply the term “inevitable creation”. While it seems that more than

<sup>1</sup> *Enneads*, V, i. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. VIII (P.G., 94, 812 and 816).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, (P.G., 94, 820).

<sup>4</sup> Proclus uses *προδόσιος*.

creation is meant, the terminology of creation is retained in regard to the Divine Wisdom in Prov. viii. 22, 23, 24, 27, and 30. Paul speaks of Christ as the "firstborn of all creation" (Col. i. 15).<sup>1</sup> A fair example of the combination is to be found in Plotinus,<sup>2</sup> "All the creations of the Intellectual-Principle are representations of the Divine Intellection and of the Divine Intellect, moulded upon the archetype, of which all are emanations and images, the nearer more true, and the very latest preserving some faint resemblance to the Source." At a later date, in Fayyūmī<sup>3</sup> of Yaman, when we might have thought that the terminology would be more settled, the Universal Reason (*al 'aql ul kullī*) is spoken of as the First Creation. There we find a number of terms such as *ma'dan ul hayāt*, origin of life, *manba' ul khayrāt*, fount of good, *asl ud sa'adāt*, source of joys, *ma'dan ul munba'atḥāt*, origin of emanations, applied to the Source and the regular system of emanations, spheres (*aflāk*), elements (*amīḥāt?*), souls (*anfus*), composite bodies (*ajsām murakkabāt*), differentiated forms (*suwar mukhtalifāt*). In Ibn Miskawaih, as we have seen, there is the doctrine that the First Cause created the Universe out of nothing and that both matter and form must have begun to exist. Nevertheless he accepts, with this creative principle, the dictum of Ibn Sīnā that only one can proceed from one, and there must therefore be a succession of units. The emanations by the creative act become grosser and grosser. From elements come inorganic or soulless substances, from these vegetation; from vegetation comes the animal, and in the animal, sense of touch is developed till all five senses are present. This means that in Ibn Miskawaih we have a combination of emanation theory akin to Neoplatonism with an Aristotelian physicism. There is a descent through the Intellect and the All-Soul met by an ascent from the elemental to the human, and man becomes in a sense the crucial point in the mediation of matter and the transcendent. There is no need to elaborate this since the whole of his statement is before us. It should be remembered that Ibn Miskawaih has quite plainly set out his system in relation to the dual process, which is characteristic of Neoplatonism, from the Highest to the lowest and from the lowest to the highest. Such ideas find a place in the mystics' poetry in later centuries and are pressed into the service of a semi-pantheistic view of existence. It could be pressed into relation with the Indo-Buddhistic views which also exerted a profound influence on the Islamic mysticism, particularly in the idea of the unreal and phenomenal issuing like fitful shadows upon the surface of the deep ocean of reality, to sink into the deep once more, rising and falling with the surge and dip of its waves.

Whatever the scheme proposed, the divine causality is implicit, and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Athanasius : *De Sentent. Dionys.* 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Enneads*, V. iii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> In *Bustān ul 'Uqūl*.

cause involves relation. Are the intermediaries causes also ? i.e., Are they causes in their own right ? Have they freedom ? In the strictest sense an instrument is not a cause. Is not the First Cause responsible for the causal character of the whole series ? The First must be responsible for the second because it is responsible for its existence, but does this mean that it is responsible for what the second does ? If the second is not free, then the inevitable conclusion is that the First is responsible for what the second does. Supposing, therefore, that we advance the theory that some viciousness in the intermediaries exonerates God from the creation of evil. Is there really any gain in this ? Does God escape responsibility because His agents introduce declension from His perfection ? An illuminating fact is that in the series the higher is always regarded as engendering the lower.<sup>1</sup> Thus declension from the perfection of the First is inevitable, and if evil is to be defined negatively as absence of perfection this very fact of the inferior proceeding at each step makes evil inherent in the first step from the Transcendent One, long before we come to the region of matter. To postulate descent through a series with the "not-so-bad" followed by the "bad" and the "bad" followed by the "worse" does not solve the problem of the existence of evil. Even the Intellectual-Principle is less than the One, and yet evil is thought to start in the region of matter.

In his discussion of the use of the term *tajallī* by the Sufis, Horten<sup>2</sup> says that the body in which the manifestation is alleged to take place is not organically connected with the Godhead. The *Kashshāf*<sup>3</sup> says that *Tajallī* is "the becoming visible" of the essence and attributes of Divinity. In this regard Horten draws a distinction between manifestation and emanation and says that in *tajallī* "the idea of emanation is entirely ruled out. . . . No parts issue or flow out from God as the Philosophy which believes in emanation expresses it. . . . The emanation theory has entirely disappeared from the intellectual culture of Islam. . . ." Manifestation "is used in contradistinction to emanation in the sense of extension of being of the Divine into the human world. . . . Emanation . . . means loss of parts of being on the part of the Deity. These pieces and parts stream into the lower world of darkness."

It will be seen from the quotations given that Horten considers that the Manifestation Theory and the Emanation Theory in Islamic thought are to be kept apart and that he commits himself to a definition of "Emanation" which is not applicable to the Neoplatonist type of this theory. There can be no doubt, on the other hand, that an emanation theory which explicitly holds the partition of the divine

<sup>1</sup> *Enneads*, V, i. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Horten : *Indische Strömungen in der islamischen Mystik*, Vol. II, pp. 11 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Sprenger : *Dictionary of Technical Terms*, pp. 268, 4ff.

is to be traced in the early Muslim sects, particularly the extremer Shi'a sects. Thus it is said that there was "a part of God" in 'Ali<sup>1</sup> and there are other passages which speak of parts of God (*juz'īyāt ul Haqq*).<sup>2</sup> In exposition of the Neoplatonist theory Muhammad Iqbāl said, "What proceeds is really the Primal One transformed." Now it seems to us that there is confusion in the thought, and a mistake in the interpretation of the Neoplatonist emanation theory, though it is possible that the mistake arose in the first place in the early assimilators of the Neoplatonist doctrine in Islam, because that most important principle of the undiminishment of the Divine and Its insusceptibility to partition have been lost to sight. This is a most important principle in Neoplatonist thought, "According to Ammonius Saccas, the teacher of Plotinus, the incorporeal is of such a nature that it unites itself to everything capable of receiving it as intimately as things which alter each other and destroy each other by being united . . . while continuing to be in this union just as it was."<sup>3</sup> The One never ceases to be one in spite of the manifold which is known to exist.

It can well be imagined that Islam with its passion for Unity should look askance at any theory, whether a philosophical theory derived from Neoplatonism or the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity, if it came to understand that such a theory involved the division of the divine, and it may well be that orthodox Islam rejected both because there was this misunderstanding. The only remnants of the doctrine of the undiminished One or that the Divine self-bestowal is without loss to Itself are to be found in such epithets applied to God as *Al Ghānī* and *At Tamām*, the Rich and the Complete, in the attribute of immutability applied to Him and in the philosophical doctrine of the Unmoved Mover. It was, of course, held by the orthodox that God was immutable and in His transcendence untouched by anything outside Him; He was wrapped in His inscrutable integrity. But far from this doctrine being held in conjunction with a theory of the self-unfoldment of the Divine, Islam considered that it definitely prohibited such a possibility.

The Neoplatonist principle had its origin in Plato, "He continued to abide by the wont of His nature."<sup>4</sup> The way in which Aristotle reinforced this can be seen in his concept of "invincible Being"<sup>5</sup> and his statement, "Under His motionless and harmonious rule the whole ordering of heaven and earth is administered."<sup>6</sup> Plotinus speaks of "the Supreme unaltering",<sup>7</sup> and speaks of the emanation as "cease-

<sup>1</sup> Shahrastānī: *Milāl wa Nihāl* (Cureton), p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* : op. cit., pp. 144 and 149.

<sup>3</sup> Ravaission: *Essai sur le Métaph. d'Arist.*, Vol. II, 374 f.

<sup>4</sup> *Timaeus*, 42E.

<sup>5</sup> *De Mundo*, 410b, 8.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 400b, 31 f.

<sup>7</sup> *Enneads*, V, i. 6.

lessly generated from that Unchanging Substance". The same idea is to be found in Porphyry<sup>1</sup> and in Philo.<sup>2</sup> The Christian accepts the idea, as, for instance, Augustine, when he wrote, "When Thou art poured forth on us . . . Thou art not dissipated but Thou gatherest us."<sup>3</sup> Athanasius applies the principle to the doctrine of the Trinity, "The Godhead communicates Itself from the Father unto the Son without dissipation or partition."<sup>4</sup>

It is strange that orthodox Islam accepts the negative aspect of this theory and neglects (except in the Mystic schools) the vastly more fruitful conception of the divine self-giving. It accepts the Plotinian conception of the One who is unaffected by external influences, "minus desire, need and name", but not the outpouring without which God remains "sterile in His inaccessible height". The mystical school represented by Al Qushayri (tenth century A.D.) accepted the Neoplatonist doctrine of intermediaries. The school represented by Bâyazid Bîstâmî and Junayd (ninth and tenth centuries A.D.) tends rather to pantheistic doctrine, and later the doctrine of the Unity of Existence (*wahdat ul wujûd*) seems to be dominant, modified sometimes into Unity of Manifestation (*wahdat ush shuhûd*), while retaining many elements in the Neoplatonist system. The earliest mysticism was hardly speculative at all. The finite universe was an expression of the divine will. This is clearly seen in Râbi'a, in Ibrâhîm b. Adham and in Shaqîq Balkhî in the eighth century A.D. Hallâj retains somewhat of the idea that the first emanation from the divine is Will (*mashiya*), but he marks the transition (and *Dhu'n Nûn Misrî* before him) from a simpler to a more complex and speculative system of mysticism. It will be noticed that in Origen also the relation of the Son to the Father is likened to the procession of will from the mind of man. In the transcendent oneness of God there is the Triad of Will, Spirit and Truth. The objectifying of God's mysterious self-revealed Will becomes personalized in the Son.<sup>5</sup> Orthodox Islam with its mythology of the Pen, the Tablet in the Heavens, and its doctrine of the Eternal Decree approximates more closely to the Semitic thought-forms than to the Hellenistic intellectualism which sees the First Emanation as Intellect.

Some of the extreme Rawâfid (Râfiqites), if we can accept Baghdâdi's account as correct,<sup>6</sup> seem to have had an affinity with the Harrâniyah in their emanational theory notably the Khattâbites, Mu'ammaries and Bazighites. The Brethren of Purity of Basra set forth a scheme in the order: Divine Unity, Primal Intellect, Soul, Primal Matter, Nature, bodies or spatial matter, the world of the

<sup>1</sup> *Aphorisms*, xxiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Leg. All.*, i. 5 (I, 46).

<sup>3</sup> *Confessions*, i. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Athanasius: *Expos. Fid.*, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Thomasius: *Hist. of Dogma*, i. 202 seq.

<sup>6</sup> *Farg*, Pt. IV, Cap. xvii.

Spheres, elements of the sublunar world, composite things of this world, i.e., inorganic substances, plants and animals. Ḥamdān Qarmat (ninth century A.D.), a keen thinker of the Ismā'īli school, represents an interesting eclectic emanationist doctrine. Baghdādi inadequately describes it as a theory that God created the Soul, that He is the First Cause, and that Soul is the second cause; Soul is called both *Nafs* and *'Aql*. Massignon considers the Qarmatians to have held creative evolution and gnostic involution. The stages of evolution or emanation from the Divine are not very dissimilar from the idea in Ibn Miskawaih and, in broad outline, the inverse stages of ascent may be compared with his upward movement. The details, however, differ. The theory of the ten intelligences is substantially the same in Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Miskawaih and the Qarmatians. The main difference is that the terminology is more suitable to the Persian Light Myth than to the Neoplatonist terminology. From the Supreme Light, there proceeds diffused, scintillating and dominant Light (*nūr sha'sha'ānī* and *nūr qāhir*). Thence the universal intellect ('*aql kullī*) and World-Soul (*nafs*) proceed. From the diffused light, "tenebrous" light (*nūr zulāmī*) proceeds. This is matter, and it appears in celestial and earthly bodies (*aflāk* and *ajsām*). From the Universal Intellect and the World-Soul human intelligences proceed, and by them the dazzling light interpenetrates the tenebrous light to free it from bondage. This dominating light is manifested in prophets and mystics as a gnosis which frees men from the bondage of sense and matter. In later times the illumination of mysticism, the "flashes"<sup>1</sup> of Jāmī and other Persian poets, and the "scintilla animæ" of Bonaventura, etc., bear witness to the vitality of such conceptions.

Confusions and inconsistencies abound in the application of the notions we have briefly described. *Logos*, *logoi*, types, powers, ideas, flashes, jostle and usurp one another's places. In Clement the functions of the Holy Spirit are attributed to the *Logos*. In Justin we find the idea that it was the *Logos* who caused the Virgin to conceive. The *Logos* is also considered to have inspired the prophets. The Philonic theory is that Sophia is the female, earthly, and manifestational side of the operation of the Divine Word and there is a bond between like a kind of marriage. The Holy Spirit is an angel in Philo. Such illustrations and others which we shall have occasion to give show how fluid was the expression of doctrine. It would be futile to look for consistency in the adaptation of the very diverse elements brought together and in the complex syntheses which are presented to us in Christian, Jewish and Islamic sources which we have examined. After all the interests of each are fundamentally determined by the dogma in each case. When the dogma is preserved the distinctions between all three are clear; when contemporary philosophy is called into service,

<sup>1</sup> *Liwā'ib, barg, etc.*

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common elements appear in all three with all sorts of permutations and combinations.

### (IV) TRINITARIAN DOCTRINE

We have already offered the opinion that this subject might be treated under two headings, either under the section dealing with the attributes of God or under this section where we are seeking to set forth the leading ideas with regard to mediation. In including the Holy Trinity in this survey, we are not presuming to set the incomparable in comparison. To try to do so would be vain and futile. However, for the time being, until we can treat of the doctrine with more freedom in the reconstructive statement we have in view, we are forced to content ourselves with the exposition of trinitarian ideas in relation to mediation and particularly in relation to theories of emanation.

Triadic symmetry was observed in systems of Greek thought before Christianity. At a comparatively early date there was a synthesis of Platonist, Aristotelian and Stoic thought which resulted in a trinitarian conception of Godhead. Here we have the One representing the Platonist concept derived from the *Parmenides*, the Primal Intellect which is peculiarly Aristotelian, and the World-Soul which is distinctively Stoic, although it should be remembered that the World-Soul is also to be found in the *Timaeus* and the *Laws* of Plato. It is possible that in the first century B.C., by Antiochus and Moderatus respectively, there was an identification of the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* with the Aristotelian Intellect and the identification of the One in the *Parmenides* with the concept of the Good and the Forms or Ideas. In Plutarch we have the triad : the Monad, the Intellect and the Nature ( $\phiύοις$ ).<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, Philo and Numenius, Ammonius Saccas and the Neoplatonists in general must owe in the main such triadic conceptions as they advance primarily to preparatory and germinal thoughts in Greek philosophy and in the work of the Middle Academy, but it is none the less true that Christian influences, especially in Numenius and Ammonius Saccas, were also at work. Though Ammonius Saccas was an apostate Christian, and Plotinus, according to Porphyry, often attacked the Christians, Plotinus had a great admiration for Origen and alongside the rejection of Christian dogma, the monotheistic trinitarianism of Christianity could not fail to attract the non-Christian Neoplatonists and might in some measure affect the emanation theories they advanced. We thus have (i) a primary impulse in pre-Christian Greek Philosophers observable in Philo and the Neoplatonists, (ii) a drawing together between Christian dogma and Platonism modified by the Peripatetics and the Stoics, (iii) an attempt by the non-Christian

*De Gen. Socr.*, xxii. 591B.

Neoplatonists to formulate trinitarian doctrine while rejecting Christian dogma, and (iv) emerging on the Christian side a primary fidelity to Christian dogma while retaining a terminology derived from Greek philosophy which had been found convenient up to a point in the statement of Christian doctrine.

In some expositions of trinitarianism tritheism was the result. Thus Numenius the Syrian presents the scheme of the First God who is Mind, simple, unchangeable, good and wise and who, because He is subject to no change, cannot create. The Second God is the Creator and presents a duality, being divided into what is created as World Spirit, and into a governing power which is the Ruler of the world. In passing, it should be noted that there is in this a two-nature implication, or the hypothesis of two natures in the second God. The necessity for some point of conjunction to provide adequately for mediation seems to be felt here. The theory of John Ascunsnage the Monophysite (sixth century A.D.) was also tritheistic, providing "no common vinculum of essence"<sup>1</sup> in the three persons, and apparently this same error was observed in the statements of John Philoponus (also called John the Tritheist) in the same century.<sup>2</sup> The Christian Church utterly repudiated such tritheistic doctrine.

Triadic schemes are not unknown in Islam. In the Philosophers the First, the Intellectual-Principle and the Soul reflect the Neoplatonist triad. In the orthodox statement of the eternity of the Qur'an there emerges the trinity of the Eternal Speaker (*Mutakallim*), the Eternal Word (*Kalām ma'nawī*) and the eternal hypostasis of the Word in the Preserved Tablet (*al lawh ul mahfūz*). The germs of the later theory of threefold aspects of the Divine, represented in Jili's *Al Insān ul Kāmil* and in the regular Sufi doctrine, namely One-ness (*ahadiyya*), He-ness (*huwīya*), and I-ness (*anīya*), referring to the Transcendent One, the Divine Thought turned in upon itself, and the Divine in relation to the world of manifestation, are really to be found in the period under review.<sup>3</sup> Jili is not hesitant in his statement for he says, "If you say that it (the essence) is one, you are right; or if you say it is two, it is in fact two. Or if you say, 'No, it is three', you are right, for that is the real nature of Man."<sup>4</sup> Sometimes this triad appears as Divinity (*Ulūhiyya*), Relative Oneness (*Aħadiyya*) and Individuation (*Wāħidiyya*) in the later Mystics of Islam providing for a monistic conception of Being and a summation of Oneness and multiplicity.<sup>5</sup>

The concern of the Christian Theologians to guard the doctrine of the Divine Unity is obvious even in the statement of trinitarian

<sup>1</sup> Mosheim : *Ecclesiastical Histy.*, Bk. II, Centy. VI, Pt. II, Cap. v.

<sup>2</sup> Damascene : *De Haeris. Pat. Græc.* (Migne), 94, 743 f.

Le., in Hallāj, Bāyazid Bistāmī and Junayd.

<sup>4</sup> *Al Insān ul Kāmil*, p. 10, quoted by Nicholson *ERE art. Sufis* (Vol. XII, 15).

<sup>5</sup> Horten : *Indische Strömungen in der islamischen Mystik*, Vol. II, p. 2.

doctrine. Thus John of Damascus in his chapter on the Holy Trinity<sup>1</sup> insists almost monotonously on the Unity. "We believe in One God, one Principle, without beginning, uncreated, unbegotten, imperishable and immortal, everlasting, infinite, uncircumscribed, boundless, of infinite power, simple, uncompounded, incorporeal, without flux, passionless, unchangeable, unalterable, unseen, fountain of goodness and justice, light of the mind, inaccessible, a power known by no measure, measurable by His own will alone, for everything He wills He can, Creator of all created things, seen or unseen, of all the Creator and Preserver, for all the Provider, Master, Lord and King over all, with an endless and immortal kingdom; having no contrary, filling all, by nothing encompassed, but rather Himself, the Encompasser, Maintainer and original Possessor of the Universe, occupying all things and absolute God, absolute Goodness and absolute Fulness . . . above essence and life and word and thought, being Himself very Light, Goodness, Life and Essence, because He does not derive His existence from another. . . . One Essence, one Divinity, one Power, one Will, one Energy, one Beginning, one Authority, one Dominion, one Sovereignty, made known in three perfect Subsistences and adored with one adoration, believed in and ministered to all by all rational creation, united without confusion and divided without separation."

Similarly, in his section on the heresies, John insists that the Christian trinitarian doctrine preserves the unity of God better than the Islamic unitarianism. "They call us Associators because they say we have introduced a companion for God when we call Christ "Son of God" and "God" . . . But since you say that Christ is the Word of God and Spirit, how can you revile us as associators? For the Word and the Spirit are inseparable from Him in whom they came into being. If therefore the Word is in God, it is clear that it is God. But if it is outside of God, then according to you, God is without a word and without mind. Therefore, while you avoid giving God a partner, you divide Him. It were better for you to say that He has a partner than to divide Him and to treat Him as if He were stone or wood or some other inanimate object. Therefore you speak falsely when you call us associators but we call you 'Dividers of God' "<sup>2</sup>.

This last passage points to another guiding principle found in the early Christian writers and that is the guarding of the Divine Personality. However severely anthropomorphism was rejected, Word and Mind were essential to the divine personality. Though "person" used in the statement of trinitarian doctrine has not the modern connotation of personality and the idea of three individuals in the God-head would be regarded as tritheism, yet the three persons are conceived

<sup>1</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. VIII (*P.G.*, 94, 808).

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Browne: *Eclipse of Christianity in Asia*, p. 129.

as integral in the divine personality. This is partly because the Christian does not start with any abstract and metaphysical distinctions, he must always begin with what is concrete and historical, the data of the Christian revelation. This is partly the reason why the Sabellian theory of manifestational phases is unsatisfying. Temporal projections exhibiting facets of an inscrutable unity do not, however personalized by us, assure us that in God is that rich archetypal personality wherein there is the eternal harmony of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One might multiply manifestations *ad infinitum* as in Hinduism and leave God as impersonal and neuter as Brahma. It is, therefore, from the Christian point of view, if the Christian revelation is to be considered as disclosing eternal reality, absolutely essential to hold the distinction of the "persons" in the transcendent being of God. A dynamic view or a reduction of the persons to mere attributes is a distinct loss to the apprehension of the integral character of God.

There seems to have been a real danger of the obscuration of the personal by the metaphysical and abstract in some attempts to explain the Trinity. Take, for example, the statement of Eliyya of Nisibis, "One of the consequences of the proof that God is living by life and speaking by speech, is that our expression 'self-existent' signifies to us something other than our expression 'speaking' and (something different from) our expression 'living' . . . 'Self-existent', 'living', 'speaking' signify to us . . . essence, speech, and life. We call the speaking 'word' since there is no speech without a word, and we call the life 'spirit' since there is no life without spirit and no spirit without life. . . . And since it is absurd to say that the Essence and the Word and the Spirit are three accidents, or three substances . . . it is established that they are three *aqānīm*.<sup>1</sup> And since the Essence is the cause of the generation of the Word, and the cause of the procession of the Spirit, and since the word is begotten of the Essence as speech is begotten of the Soul and brilliance is begotten of the sun; and since the Spirit proceeds from the Essence as life proceeds from the soul and heat from the sun; *therefore* the Essence is called Father and the Word is called Son, and the Life is called Holy Spirit."<sup>2</sup>

The devastating "therefore" in the last sentence gives the clue to the viciousness of the whole statement. In its premises and conclusions have changed places. We start with "Essence" and we conclude with "Father", we begin with "*Logos*" and end with "Son", we postulate "Life" and we end with "Holy Spirit". The assumptions are "rational" and they prove revelation. It is on account of statements like this that Shahrastānī, speaking of Abū Hudhayl's opinion on the attributes, namely, that they are modes of the essence, says that this

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix I.

<sup>2</sup> Cheikho : *Vingt Traits*, 33 quoted by Browne: *op. cit.*

is to be compared with the persons of the Trinity in Christian thought.<sup>1</sup> It is only accidentally that Christian doctrine has any concern with a logical or conceptual trinity. Its premisses are in the revelation of Fatherhood, of the Sonship of Christ, and of the Divine Comforter.

Through various vicissitudes Christian theology comes to the repudiation of theories of vertical emanation. Here again there were dangers to be averted. In the earliest formulation of doctrine among the Alexandrians before the implications for Christian faith were clearly seen, there seems to have been a danger of a lapse into emanationism, but this danger was gradually averted until at last utterly repudiated in the rejection of Arianism. The subordinationism which obtrudes itself so often in the initial stages of the development of doctrine is more consistent with the theory of a series of emanations than with the doctrine of three coequal persons in the Godhead. We might take for example what Clement says, "God begat Himself at the beginning, before all creation, a certain reasonable power called by the Holy Spirit, 'Glory of the Lord, Son, Wisdom, Angel, God, Lord and Word'. This begetting results in no change in the Godhead any more than fire is reduced by kindling a second fire from it." It is true that crude ideas of emanation, such, e.g., as rays of light, are rejected by Clement, but nevertheless Christ is a creature begotten by an act of God the Father. This brings about the personal distinction, which is not considered eternal. The Father extends Himself into Son and Spirit. Similarly in Beryl of Bostra we have the idea of a radiation from God conceived as entering into the human body of Christ.

In Origen also there is subordinationism. The Father is the Fount from which Divinity is drawn and Origen's subordination theory is based on texts of Scripture such as "The Father is greater than I" and "None is Good save One". This reminds us that while subordination may be quite erroneous as an explanation of the being of the Triune Godhead, it has its legitimate application to the human life of Jesus. Thus Origen's subordinationism has not the menace discernible in that of other early thinkers. Tertullian might equally be cited as teaching subordinationism though he stoutly maintains consubstantiality<sup>2</sup> and expressly teaches the inseparability of the divine persons.<sup>3</sup> Dionysius of Alexandria (d. 265), and his contemporary Eusebius of Cæsarea were both subordinationists. It must be remembered that in these early times there is much fluidity in expression. Origen, for instance, speaks of the Holy Spirit as intellectual sub-

<sup>1</sup> Abū Hudhayl's theory is, "God is knowing through knowledge and knowledge is His essence, powerful through power, and power is His essence, living through life, and life is His essence."

<sup>2</sup> Paul of Samosata (third century A.D.) held that Logos and Spirit were properties or attributes of God.

<sup>3</sup> *Adv. Prax.*, ix. 30.

\* *Ibid.*, 7, 8, 25.

stance<sup>1</sup> which might quite easily be interpreted as a celestial emanation from the Divinity, but the same writer, in another place,<sup>2</sup> denies quite categorically that the Spirit is a creature. Similarly, in relation to the subordination of the Son in Origen's doctrine, we have the safeguard of "eternal generation". Lucian of Antioch taught that the Logos was subordinate, but his successor Diodorus held the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father.

It is in Arianism, Eunomianism and Macedonianism that we find an explicit subordinationism which seriously violates the Christian conception of the Godhead. According to Athanasius<sup>3</sup> the Macedonians asserted that the Spirit was merely a creature, one of the "ministering spirits". Such a view was repudiated.<sup>4</sup> Gregory of Nyssa is our informant with regard to the tenets of the Eunomians. After the Supreme and Absolute comes a second Being inferior in rank. A third inferior is produced from the second. The relation of the third to the first is as what is caused to its Cause, and the relation of the third to the second is as what is produced to the power that produced it.<sup>5</sup> Arianism bears the stamp of vertical emanationism but differs in one point, namely, in its declaration that God could not send forth anything from His essence. It adopted, therefore, the language of creation. Christ is not of the essence of the Father but is created *ex nihilo*. The Christ of Arianism is neither truly God nor truly man; the Logos is the first creation of God: just as in Neoplatonism the Intellectual-Principle is the first emanation from the One. This supernatural Logos is joined to a soulless body. Support for such a view could only be found in a crudely literal interpretation of Scripture. Such an interpretation must, however, do violence to the axiomatic divinity of Christ. In Arianism the Spirit is the creation of the Son.<sup>6</sup> It should be recognized that by this, instead of "Immanuel, God with us", which is the keyword of the Christian evangel, we have a God who is cut off from man. The un-Christian emanationism designed to sever God from contamination by the world and man here invades Christianity and is rightly rejected. Athanasius saw the implications clearly. Arianism meant that man could have communion with a secondary emanation but not with God Himself. Thus the atonement of God and man is thrust into the background. Christian interest in any idea of Divine procession must be bound up with and dominated by the fact of the coming of the Divine into relation with man, "in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin",<sup>7</sup> in "real contact between God

<sup>1</sup> *De Princ.*, I, i. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, iii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Epp. ad Serap.*, i. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Socrates: *Eccles. Hist.*, iii. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Moore: *ERE*, art. *Eunomianism* (v. 575).

<sup>6</sup> Harnack: *Hist. of Dogma*, iv. 41-42.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Caird: *Evol. of Theology in the Gk. Philosophers*, ii. 329 f. and 364.

and man, in a real redemption, wrought out by a real Divine Saviour, in the midst of the actual world.”<sup>1</sup>

In spite of faithfully accepting the Trinitarian doctrine of the Godhead, how little Christianity could tolerate any theory which disrupted the Godhead may be seen in the insistence on the correlation of the Persons in the Trinity. The successive phases of Sabellianism or any hypothesis of degrees in divinity were utterly unacceptable. The Damascene uses strong language. “There was never a time when the Father was and the Son was not.” The names Father and Son are correlatives. God cannot be spoken of as “becoming a father”. “This is the worst form of blasphemy.” Gregory of Nazianzus is quite unequivocal. “There is one God because there is only one thing which may be called Godhead.” In the case of Arius we find opposition to a hypothesis which implies a partition of the divine into three portions of divine substance. This is the idea which Arius attributed to his opponents, and it involves the idea on his part that substance is stuff. Therefore the Son was declared by him to be of “no stuff”. There seems to be little justification for this misinterpretation by Arius of his opponents’ views. They considered that the substance of the divine was imparted to the Son by the unique “begetting” without that substance being subjected to partition. We have seen the corresponding idea in the emanation theories, which we have described as the conception of the undiminished divine. Thus the orthodox position was nearer the truth because it maintained the unity of God without postulating inferior divinity for the Son and the Holy Spirit.

It is not too much to say that a dominant interest in the working out of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is that the unity should not suffer and that in every divine act there should be understood the working of the Father, through the Son, in and by the Holy Spirit. Thus, counterbalancing the ideas of procession, we have the conception of interrelation, coinherence, circumincession. As early as Origen we have an appreciation of the significance of John xiv. 10, “I am in the Father and the Father in Me.” Athanasius also takes up the same thought. Circumincession is clearly taught by Gregory of Nyssa and Basil of Cæsarea says, “The Spirit is conjoined with and inseparable from the Father and the Son in every operation.”<sup>2</sup> Augustine emphasises eternal reciprocity of relation between the Persons.<sup>3</sup> John of Damascus uses the term circumincession (*περιχώρησις*)<sup>4</sup> and though for the Divine Essence to be “united without confusion and divided without separation” is admitted by him to transcend thought, this idea of unity of divine personality in mutually inclusive persons is

<sup>1</sup> Davison : *ERE*, art. *God (Biblical and Christian)* (vi. 261a).

<sup>2</sup> *De Spir. Sanc.*, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Migne : *Pat. Lat.* xxxiii. 1043.

*De Fide Orthod.*, Pt. I, Cap. viii (P.G., 94, 829).

one which unites monotheism with the distinctive revelation of the Divine in Christianity ; for there, while the Father is the Creator, all things were made by the Word and without Him was not anything made that hath been made ; and again, it was the Spirit of God which moved on the face of the waters. God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself and the Comforter is the Paraclete and Spirit of Truth, while we have one Paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. The nearest we come to the idea of circumcession in the philosophical statement is the "circumradiation" of Plotinus.<sup>1</sup> But in Christianity the idea is not prompted by any metaphysical theory, but is welcomed as adequate to the description of revealed facts,<sup>2</sup> and as affirming the substance of faith. Christ is seen for thirty months or thirty years, but these are not a mere episode, a brief and transient manifestation, the sudden glory of a dawn, and the passing beauty of a sunset which only lingers in the memory and cannot be recaptured ; no mere episode, but the epitome of eternity linked in undivided unity with the Father's purpose before all worlds and the Spirit's indwelling throughout all time.

It is to the Cappadocian school that we owe the main elements of the formal statement of trinitarian doctrine in Christianity. Thus Gregory of Nyssa has the complete formula of the Trinity in one substance and three hypostases. Basil is perhaps not always sufficiently precise in the language he uses with regard to the Trinity, sometimes suggesting modalism by his "modes of existence" (*τρόποι ὑπάρξεως*) as he calls the three Persons, while on the other hand verging on tritheistic expressions but both the Gregories are singularly cautious in their terminology and the general result is that the Divine Unity is brought into clear and definite prominence without the least sacrifice of the essentials of trinitarian doctrine. Thus we find emphasized tri-personality, with coequality of the Persons in nature, unanimity in judgment, identity in action, concurrence, and a denial of any partition or separation in the being of the Persons while maintaining the eternal threefold differentiation.

In the section dealing with Emanation we have had occasion to speak of certain terms such as "generation" and "procession". It is not improbable that in regard to these ideas Neoplatonism owes as much to Christianity as to previous philosophical thought. In the New Testament the Son is the uniquely begotten. A great variety of words is in use for procession. Tertullian uses "emission" (*προβολή*) to describe the relation of the Son and Spirit to the Father. Philo before him had used the term *ἀπόσπασμα*<sup>3</sup> which is sometimes translated "fragment", but which might be better translated "offshoot"

<sup>1</sup> *Enneads*, V, i. 6.

<sup>2</sup> For further references see Augustine : *De Trin.*, vi. 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Somn.*, i. 6 (i. 625).

because Philo specially rules out any idea of fracture or rupture<sup>1</sup> in the procession of mind from God. Both terms seem to have been found objectionable or inadequate. Other terms have been mentioned in the section to which we have referred above.

We have also in that place mentioned the point of causal connexion in the emanational series. Gregory of Nyssa presents the conception of causal procession exhibited in the relation of the Persons of the Holy Trinity. The Cause pre-eminently is the Father, the Caused immediately is the Son, and the Caused mediately is the Holy Spirit. The procession is supertemporal (which should be compared with the parallel idea in Plotinus) from the Father, through the Son, to the Spirit. Along with this causal procession there is interaction and coinherence.<sup>2</sup> We have also noted the formula One Substance and Three Persons (*μία οὐσία καὶ τρεῖς ὑποτάσσεις*).

Are we finally to conclude from the use of metaphysical terms that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is purely metaphysical as Muslim critics aver? Harnack seems to make an arbitrary distinction between Alexandria and Antioch in this connexion. Thus he says that the Antiochean school as represented, e.g., by Chrysostom and Theodore in common with Paul of Samosata, Lucian, Diodorus, and Theodoret is not metaphysical but scriptural. Yet he admits that Antioch uses the term substance (*οὐσία*) in an Aristotelian sense.<sup>3</sup> Take also the statement of Theodore on the procession of the Holy Spirit. He denies that the Spirit was sent on a mission and uses the terms "natural procession"<sup>4</sup> to describe what takes place. We have already seen that Eliyya of Nisibis, who stands in direct succession to Theodore, says that there is no difference in saying, "one nature, three persons" and saying "self-existent possessor of life and wisdom". Might not these be labelled metaphysical? Indeed if to use metaphysical language is to be metaphysical, it is difficult to see how Antioch can be differentiated in any wise from Alexandria. A change from Platonism to Aristotelianism does not constitute a change from the metaphysical to something else. It is, of course, quite likely that Antioch used fewer metaphysical terms. Nevertheless, if the meaning is that doctrine is metaphysical as conforming severely to some particular metaphysical system or because metaphysics is the primary interest in the formulation, then neither Antioch nor Alexandria should be described as metaphysical. After all, Origen and Athanasius are Alexandrians, and the former's devotion to the historical data largely

<sup>1</sup> *Quod det. pot. ins.*, 24 (I, 208-9).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. what has been said above about Hamdān Qarmāt and also the causal relations which Numenius emphasizes in his tritheistic theory. See also Woodbrooke Studies, ii. 63 quoted above, Vol. I, p. 76. For Gregory's statement see *Contra Eunomium*, i. 42 (Migne: P.G., 45, 464) and *Contra Ar. et Sab.*, 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. of Dogma*, iii. 46.

<sup>4</sup> Greek: φυσικὴ πρόδοσ.

determined the Antiochene school in that direction, while the latter stood as a bulwark against Arianism which constituted a real menace from the Hellenistic side to the detriment of Christian dogma. Similarly in the creedal statements which have often been described as metaphysical documents, the scriptural basis is clearly seen and the Christian revelation definitive.

#### (v) INCARNATION

Islam denies the incarnation, but it will become quite clear to us that in various schools of Islamic theology something has had to be devised to take its place. At this stage of development two points call for comment. Firstly, there is the denial in the Qur'ān of what is understood to be incarnation. With this we have already dealt sufficiently. The denial is related to something which is not really the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. Later, when Islam had more accurate information, protests were strengthened against the attribution of Sonship to Jesus Christ. Then followed a reasoned attack against "indwelling" (*hulūl*) and "union" (*ittihād*) as these terms were understood to be used in the interpretation of the mode of the Incarnation. The idea of indwelling was attacked from the standpoint of an Aristotelian conception of "suppositum" (*mahall*). God could not be conceived as subsisting in a suppositum. The idea of union was rejected from the presupposition of the impossibility of unlike substances being joined in mixture (*μίξις*) or mingling or of two substances becoming one (*ενώσις*).<sup>1</sup> Secondly, on the positive side there is the substitution of the prophet in his person and work for mediation in incarnation. It cannot be too often said that the term *hulūl* does not mean incarnation in the Christian sense. It is unfortunate that Prof. R. A. Nicholson almost invariably translates the word *hulūl* when it occurs in the mystical works as "incarnation", and this lends the weight of his authority to those Muslims who consider that *hulūl* is a fair rendering of the word "incarnation", whereas the Christian theologian is as much concerned to deny that God can be contained in a suppositum as any Muslim.

In addition to the orthodox doctrine of the Prophethood, there are various manifestation theories in Islam, chiefly in the Sufi and Shi'ite thinkers. There is, however, some ground to think that theories of manifestation were more widespread than the regular Sufistic schools. It is also quite certain that something even more resembling incarnation was prominent from an early date in Shi'ite sects. Al Ghazzālī is not untouched by such ideas, although he belongs to an age when a reaction had set in against rationalism, the extremer *ta'līmism*, etc. And though Al Ghazzālī is not classed with the regular mystics, his *Mishkāt ul Anwār* shows how much he was influenced by ideas of the

<sup>1</sup> This will be discussed in full in a later volume.

manifestation of the divine. He really stands outside the age with which we are dealing, but we can take it that the ideas which he expresses were preceded by very much similar concepts, because even in his *Iḥyā*, which because it was addressed to a very wide circle and might be classified as popular theology, would be most likely to contain material which could gain popular acceptance, there can be found traces of theories of manifestation.<sup>1</sup>

If we examine the development of Christian theology we become at once aware of the immense mass of thought which was directed to the interpretation of the Person of Christ. We have already indicated the broad lines of early controversy and the development of the doctrine.

Turning to the consideration of the doctrine of incarnation in reference to emanation, the first point which we would note is that in one very important respect the emanation system is very vague. The multiplication of links between the divine and the human obscures the critical link where the vital conjunction may be contemplated. Certain words of Caird are very illuminating. He speaks of Neoplatonism's "hierarchy of powers reaching up to the Absolute One and down to formless matter" as showing "the need of mediation and the impossibility of attaining it in consistency with the presuppositions from which the system started. *For in true mediation the middle term cannot be a mere intermediate, but must transcend and comprehend in one the two terms that are opposed.*"<sup>2</sup> Again, Neoplatonism separated the infinite and the finite most sharply. It tried to mediate between them by means of the Intellectual-Principle and the All-Soul, yet the All-Soul was in the intelligible world, and could not be conceived as descending into the world of sense and matter, or as reconciling the world of sense and matter with the divine. "Its last word was escape and not reconciliation, the deliverance of the soul from the bonds of finitude, and not the conversion of the finite into the organ and manifestation of the Infinite."<sup>3</sup>

Though the terms which Athanasius used may be liable to a misinterpretation, when he said, "He became enhumaned that we might be deified",<sup>4</sup> there can be no doubt that this represents the effective unity vital to mediation, and it is thus, as we have said, that Christianity focuses mediation, revelatory and redemptive, in the unique act of God, refusing to suffer the efficacious reconciliation to be lost in a maze of intermediaries or to be diffused into a tenuity where God recedes into the dim vistas of an utterly remote transcendence: for the virtue of Christianity cannot but resist such a process. This is not to say that individual Christian thinkers have always successfully

<sup>1</sup> *Vide, supra*, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> *Evol. of Theology*, Vol. II, p. 364.

<sup>3</sup> Caird: *Evol. of Theology*, Vol. II, 370.

<sup>4</sup> *De Incarn. Verbi*, Sect. 54.

resisted it, as we have had occasion to remark. They did as Neoplatonism also did thrusting back the Link into the transcendent realm. A transcendent Christ was added to the heavenly hierarchy and "the mediation of the Virgin and the Saints had to be brought in to fill up the breach thus made in the unity of the human and the divine".

After such an unwarranted and alien dichotomy, we find frantic attempts to restore the conception of the unity or union of the divine and the human. Antioch can do little better than bring two opposites into juxtaposition and is in danger of resolving the unity of the Divine Subject, which seems to us to be the essential truth of the Incarnation, into a duality of God-subject and man-subject, by an undue emphasis on difference. Thus, broadly speaking, some Alexandrians (like Clement)<sup>1</sup> tended to thrust the Incarnate Word into the transcendent sphere in the manner of the Neoplatonist Intellectual-Principle or World-Soul, and held out hope to man of escape from himself into a union only to be realized on a plane of abstraction from manhood into pure intellectual contemplation and ascetic stripping of "gross" sense and body. On the other hand, Antioch, while holding more firmly a more satisfying view of the Christ of the Gospels, fails to escape a perverse disseverance of the divine and human, for which it has afterwards to explore modes of union like a man seeking to reconcile two contradictories, instead of accepting by faith the fundamental presentation of a consummated Unity which defies analysis, and the inevitability of which survives the profoundest scrutiny of possible modes whereby it might have been actualized. The actuality is presented to faith and the exploration of its modes adds nothing to that actuality, just as a reverent agnosticism with respect to the modes takes nothing from it.

A characteristic note is: How could God possibly suffer such humiliation? That God, the incomprehensible and ineffable reality should descend and take on Him a human form, wrapping Himself in the disguise of humanity seems almost monstrous. As we have already said, if this is the language of worshipping wonder, it is permissible, but it is not permissible as an expression of incredulity about this particular form of the divine activity. If it is, it takes away the last vestiges of the self-revelation of God and His self-giving; the divine plerosis is consummated in the divine kenosis, and the revelation of the glory of God is in the Incarnation. Sinners may say in the amazement of praise, "How can it be?", but faith must say that nothing else could be if God is truly the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We can take what the Damascene says in his exposition of the orthodox faith<sup>2</sup> as gathering up what Christian theology had to say

<sup>1</sup> See *Stromat.*, v. i and vi. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Migne: *Pat. Graeca*. 94, col. 1181 ff. (Pt. IV, Cap. xviii).

with regard to the Incarnation at the period of which we are writing. His testimony is valuable also because it comes from one who has gained familiarity with Muslim ideas. He says, "The things said concerning Christ fall into four generic modes. For some fit Him even before the Incarnation, others in the Union, others after the Union, and others after the Resurrection. Moreover, of those that refer to the period before the Incarnation there are six modes. Some declare the union of the nature and the identity of the essence with the Father, such as 'I and the Father are one', and 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father', and 'Who being in the form of God' and so on. Others declare the perfection of subsistence as 'Son of God', 'express image of His person', 'Wonderful Counsellor' (*Isa.* ix. 6). Again others declare the circumincession of the hypostases in one another as, for instance, 'I am in the Father and the Father in Me', and that which is fixed and incapable of passing from one to another (*ἀνεκφοίτητον ζήτωσιν*), e.g., Word, Wisdom, Power, Effulgence. . . . Others make known the fact of His origin from the Father as Cause, e.g., 'My Father is greater than I', since from the Father He derives both His being and all that He has, which is by generation and not by creation, as for instance, 'I came forth from the Father and am come', and also, 'I live by the Father' (*Jno.* vi. 57). But all that He has is not by concession or instruction but *ex causa*, as 'The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.' For if the Father does not exist neither does the Son, because the Son is of the Father and in the Father and with the Father and not after the Father . . . .

" Furthermore, other things are said as though the goodwill of the Father was fulfilled through His energy, and not as if by an instrument or a servant,<sup>1</sup> but as through His essential and hypostatic Word, Wisdom and Power,<sup>2</sup> because only one action is observed in Father and Son. Thus for instance, 'All things were made by Him', and 'He sent His Word and healed them', and 'That they may believe that Thou hast sent me'. Some again are prophetic and some of these are in the future tense (such as *Ps.* xliv. 3; *Zech.* ix. 9; *Mic.* i. 3). Others, though future, are put into the past tense, e.g., 'This is our God; therefore was He seen upon the earth and dwelt among men' (*Baruch* iii. 38); 'The Lord created me in the beginning of His ways for His works' (*Prov.* viii. 22); 'Wherefore God thy God anointed thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows' (*Ps.* xlv. 7). So the things said which refer to the period before the Union will apply to Him also after the Union. But those things which refer to the period after the Union will not be applicable at all before the Union except possibly in a prophetic sense.

<sup>1</sup> Clement had spoken of Christ as *διάκονος* of the Father (*Pœd.*, iii. 1, 2).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Clement: Christ is spoken of as "sum of the powers" (*Pœd.*, i. 8, 74 and *Strom.*, iv. 25, 156), "Power" (*Strom.*, v. 1, 6), "Energy" (*Strom.*, vii. 2, 8).

" Those things that refer to the time of the Union have three modes ; for when we speak of the higher aspect we speak of the deification of the flesh from the Union and the Symphysis with the Most High God, the Word. When we are speaking about the lower we talk of the Incarnation of God the Word, His becoming man, His emptying Himself, His poverty, His humility . . . Having both aspects in view we speak of Union (*ένωσις*), Fellowship (*κοινωνία*), Unction (*χρήσις*), Symphysis and Conformation (*συμμόρφωσις*) . . .

" Of the things referring to the period after the union there are three modes. The first declares His divine nature, e.g., Jno. xiv. 1 and John x. 30. And all the things which are affirmed of Him before He put on humanity will be affirmed of Him after He had assumed humanity with the exception that He did not assume flesh and its natural properties. The second declares His human nature, e.g. Jno. vii. 19 ; viii. 40 ; and iii. 14. (Of this second) . . . there are six modes. 1. Some of them were said naturally in accordance with the Incarnation, e.g., birth of the Virgin, growth and progress with age, hunger, thirst, weariness, fear, sleep, being pierced with nails, death and all such natural and innocent passions. For in all of these there is mixture of divine and human, although they are held to belong really to the body, the divine not suffering them but procuring through them our salvation. 2. Others are of the nature of ostensibility (*προστόησις*), e.g., Christ's question in Jno. xi. 34, His running to the fig tree, His shrinking, i.e., His drawing back, His praying, and His ' making as though He would have gone farther ' (Luke xxiv. 28). For He had need of these things neither as God nor as man nor of things like them, but only because His was the form of a man and as necessity and expediency required. Thus the praying was to show that He was not opposed to God, for He gives honour to the Father as the cause of Himself. And the question was not put in ignorance but to show that He was truly man as well as God, and the drawing back is to teach us not to be impetuous. . . . 3. Others are said in the manner of appropriation and relation, as e.g., ' My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? ' and ' being made a curse for us ' and also ' Then shall the son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him.' For neither as God nor as man was He ever forsaken by the Father nor did He become sin or curse, nor did He require to be made subject to the Father, since as God He is equal to the Father and not opposed to Him and not subjected to Him ; and as God He was never at any time disobedient to His Begetter to make it necessary for Him to be brought into subjection. Therefore, appropriating our person and ranking Himself with us, He used these words, for we are bound in the chains of sin and the curse, being faithless and disobedient and therefore derelict. 4. Others are said by reason of a distinction in thought. Thus ' servant ' and ' ignorant ' and . . . calling His Father ' God '

. . . 5. Others are for the purpose of revealing Himself to us and to strengthen our faith as in Jno. xvii. 5 . . . also as said by the Apostle in Rom. i. 4 and as also in Luke ii. 40. . . . 6. Others have reference to His assuming the personal life of the Jews, in reckoning Himself among the Jews, as He said to the woman of Samaria, ‘ Ye worship ye know not what ; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.’

“The third mode is one which declares the one hypostasis and exhibits the dual nature, e.g., Jno. xvi. 10 ; 1 Cor. ii. 8 ; Jno. iii. 13, and the like.

“Again, of the affirmations referring to after the resurrection some are fitting to God, e.g., Matt. xxviii. 19, for in this place ‘Son’ is clearly used as God ; moreover Matt. xxviii. 20 and others similar. For He is with us as God. Others are suitable to man, e.g., Matt. xxviii. 9 and 10. Furthermore, of affirmations appropriate to man referring to the post-resurrection period, there are various modes ; for some actually took place, yet not according to nature but according to dispensation, in order to confirm the fact that the very body which suffered rose again, e.g., the wounds, and the eating and drinking after the resurrection. Others took place actually and naturally as changing from place to place without trouble, and passing through closed doors. Others have the character of ostensibility, e.g., Luke xxiv. 28. Others are appropriate to the dual nature as Jno. xx. 17 ; Ps. xxiv. 7 ; Heb. i. 3. Finally others are to be understood as though He were ranging Himself alongside us in the manner of separation in pure thought, as ‘My God and your God’.

“Therefore, those that are sublime must be assigned to the Divine nature which transcends passion and body, and those that are mean must be ascribed to human nature, and those that are common must be attributed to the compound (*σύνθετος*), the one Christ who is both God and man.”

This long extract from the Damascene shows that there was very little theorizing, the main object in view being to analyse the material provided by Scripture. The same fact is to be observed in Origen. Though working with the Alexandrine concepts and applying the exegetical methods of that school, he is always ultimately and decisively influenced by revelation. He thus escapes the toils of Philo’s emanationism. He, like the Damascene, is devoted to the concept of Union and he is the first to use the term God-man.<sup>1</sup> The concept of Union is vital to a satisfactory doctrine of mediation, and by it the entrance of anything approaching Arianism is effectively barred. How there can be real mediation of the Arian pattern must be left to the explanation of those whose minds move to doctrines of super-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *De Principiis*, ii. 6, 4 ff; *In Joann.*, i. 37; *Contra Celsum*, i. 32, 33; iv. 15; vii. 16.

natural beings, powers, and angels, which imply that God is "there" and man is "here" and that the distance between the two must be traversed by a being neither God nor man. The truth, on the contrary, is that God is here where man is, that Man is there where God is, and that man will be where God is. By which rejection of alternative location and the repudiation of the presumptuous negatives, the eternal space- and time-transcending Being is conceived as incapable of separation from the work of His hands.

We must also describe briefly the main points which are distinctive of the theology of Theodore of Mopsuestia because his terminology differs in some respects. He uses the term *prosopon* in preference to *hypostasis* for "Person" and he denies that the persons are different "substances" (*οὐσίατ*). The term *prosopon* was used in Sabellianism for "aspect" and in the mystical writers of Islam has an echo in the word "*wajh*" which means "face" or "aspect," though sometimes it is also used by other writers for "essence", particularly in the exposition of the Quranic text, "Everything is perishing save His face" (Sura xxviii. 88).<sup>1</sup> In Theodore's terminology for "Union" he does not differ from that used by such opposites as Paul of Samosata and John of Damascus. He uses both juncture (*συνάφεια*) and oneness (*ἐνωσις*). But in his interpretation of Union Theodore insisted that the bond was not substantial but voluntary. "The thought of a substantial union is true only with the elements of the same substance, but with elements of a different substance it is false, because it cannot be free from confusion: but the mode of union by goodwill (*εὐδοκία*) preserves the natures unconfused, and shows that the person (*πρόσωπον*) made up of both is one and indivisible."<sup>2</sup> It is worthy of note that this is precisely the argument against substantial union which is used against Incarnation in Muslim Theology. We find it in the *Mawāqif* of Ijī and in other writers.<sup>3</sup> The link is undoubtedly through the Nestorians, for Nestorius denied that there was a union of divinity and humanity in essence. He said there was co-operation in acts and correspondence in attributes but there was no interchange. Could not this endanger the unity of Christ? The implications of the statement may be discerned in the reply of his opponent Cyril, who asserted a physical and metaphysical union of the two natures in Christ. He insisted that God became man and was not placed alongside man.<sup>4</sup> This was further pressed to the statement that after the incarnation it is only in the abstract that there are two natures, but really there is only one incarnate nature of the Divine Word and a unity of subject—divine-human—in Christ. Nestorius quarrelled with

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also, "Wherever ye turn there is God's face" (Sura ii. 109) and, "The face of thy Lord endowed with majesty and honour shall endure" (Sura lv. 27).

<sup>2</sup> *Eranistes* dial. i., Sect. 57 and ii., Sect. 134.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide Al Kalām 'ala Falsafat ul Islām*, Vol. II, p. 98.

<sup>4</sup> ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος, οὐ συνήθη ἀνθρώπῳ

this statement because he said it was contrary to the distinction of essence in God and man and because by such a view God would cease to be immutable by assuming humanity, or because it would involve a mixture of humanity with divinity, or because in the Word assuming flesh there would be a change of place. It is remarkable that Muslim objectors use quite similar arguments to-day and conclude from them that the incarnation is impossible. Nestorius follows Theodore's interpretation.

Theodore adds one term in his interpretation of the Incarnation. This is "indwelling" (*ἐνοίκησις*). The word which corresponds to this in the Muslim theologians is "*hulūl*".<sup>1</sup> Theodore discusses<sup>2</sup> three modes of this indwelling, to help towards the understanding of how the two natures are joined in Christ. In so doing he starts with certain principles which earlier theologians had accepted. God is invisible and incorporeal; He cannot be limited in a bodily form and He is immutable in His substance.<sup>3</sup> It is from such premises that the later Muslim theologians argue. Behind the Muslim objections is the idea that the incarnation must mean a sort of metamorphosis in the manner of a magical change of one thing into another thing. One wonders whether something similar is not at the back of the mind of those who feel that the principles we have mentioned are violated in any way by a doctrine of the Incarnation. We must leave the full discussion of this matter to a later section of this book. Here it must suffice to have entered the caveat. In his discussion of indwelling, Theodore maintains that it is most improper and even absurd to suggest that God's substance is limited, because God is omnipresent and therefore not to be indicated as in a particular place. The inference is, that if Christ is substantially God then by the assumption of a human body He becomes circumscribed in space and time. Thus substantial indwelling is ruled out. Indwelling may also be conceived as dynamic (*ἐνεργεία*), but God is present by His operation and activity in all things which subsist by Him and so this could not be distinctive of the Incarnation. There is left to Theodore what he considers to be the only valid conception of indwelling as applied to the Incarnation, namely, indwelling by goodwill. When it is urged that gracious indwelling is effective in saints the answer given is that the indwelling in Christ is so greatly different in degree that it can be said to amount to a difference in kind. Whether such an indwelling can be properly described as incarnation or whether it is a substitution for the doctrine of incarnation must be discussed later. It is, however, necessary to say here that such a view of indwelling would be acceptable to certain mystical schools in Islam and this, in all probability, is the doctrine of *hulūl* which may be attributed to Mansūr Hallāj.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide supra*, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *De Incarn.* Migne: *Pat. Græc.*, lxvi. 972 f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. for instance, Origen: *Contra Cels.*, iv. 14; vii. 38, and *On Prayer*, xxiii.

There is also a strong probability that in Theodore we may trace the influence of Paul of Samosata. In Paul's view, the Word and Wisdom of God is not personal and not substantial. The Word is the Divine Mind. This Divine Mind dwelt in Jesus and was operative in Him. It was by virtue of this indwelling that Christ gradually acquired both knowledge and practical virtue. Note that this is simply an expansion of the prophet idea and in most expositions of prophethood Muslims use terms which approximate to those just used, namely, that the perfection of the speculative and practical virtues is the mark of prophethood. The idea of indwelling is, however, not happily received in orthodox Muslim theology, although as *wahī*<sup>1</sup> is described by some writers it is not far removed from what one would understand by the term "God-possession". Theodore has, of course, moved over into a more orthodox position than that of Paul of Samosata, but one cannot help but feel that there is still lingering the influence of the more extreme views of the school of Antioch, and that these are responsible for a certain restraint in Theodore and in the later Nestorians.

It might be appropriate to quote here by way of illustration only, since the writer lies outside the period of which we are writing, the words of Shahrastānī which show that he had some inkling of the direction in which the truth might lie. He is not speaking of incarnation in the Christian sense but of the embodiment of angels, but what he says has a wider application. "The angel did not assume a body, in the sense that a subtle body became gross in the way that thin air becomes a dense cloud, as is popularly supposed, nor was his real nature annihilated and another brought into being, nor his nature changed to another: all this is impossible. But luminous substances have the peculiar power of appearing in whatever person they wish (Suras xix. 17 and vi. 9). There is no parallel in this world except the relation of our souls to our bodies."<sup>2</sup> We should compare this with what the Damascene says,<sup>3</sup> "The Divine nature has the property of penetrating all things without mixing with them and of being itself impenetrable by anything else." It is inconsistent to accept as axiomatic that God is not corporeal and then to speak of what is possible and what impossible for the Divine substance as if substance were corporeality. Thus in his discussion of the incorporeality of God the Damascene says, "How will it be maintained that God permeates and fills the universe? It is an impossibility that one body should permeate other bodies without dividing and being divided, and without being interlaced and contrasted in the way that all fluids mix and commingle." Having ruled out such possibilities they are ruled out as explanations of the Incarnation, and the rejection of any idea of incarnation involv-

<sup>1</sup> Prophetic inspiration or revelation.

<sup>2</sup> *Kitāb Nihayatū'l Iqdām fi 'Ilmī'l Kalām*, Guillaume's trans., p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, I, Cap. XIV (P.G., 94, 860).

ing a crude conception of the corporeality of God should find approval with Christian and Muslim alike.

We cannot afford the space to deal adequately with it, but cannot leave entirely untouched the question whether in these early expositions the character of Christ as Incarnate Mediator was conceived in a manner inconsistent with His true humanity. When we turn to the Damascene's exposition of "modes" we are brought sharply face to face with the mode of "ostensibility" which suggests unreality in the humanity of Christ. He uses in this very connexion an ambiguous phrase : "Only because His was the form of a man." It might be argued that this is docetic. But it should be remembered that the Damascene is using the term "form" in an Aristotelian sense and that this does not imply unreality at all. In fact, it is form impressed on neutral matter which gives the latter its character. Similarly, Theodore of Mopsuestia speaks of the humanity as *πρόσωπον*, which is at least perplexing. He has used the term for "person" and now uses it for humanity. Has he used it to signify a human person? Or has he used the term in the sense of "appearance" or "aspect"? If he has, did he use the term in the same sense for the persons of the Trinity and for the humanity of the incarnate Word? If so, then there is a dangerous ambiguity, and a possibility of a Sabellian interpretation on the one hand, and a division of the Divine-human Subject in the Incarnation on the other. John of Damascus considered that the Nestorians did the latter. "They attribute the humbler things wrought by the Lord in the days of His sojourn with us solely to His manhood; while the loftier and divine actions they attribute to God the Word; and they do not attribute both together to one and the same 'person'."<sup>1</sup> This, of course, might have been true of later Nestorians and not particularly of Theodore. Eliyya of Nisibis certainly comes very near to the position which the Damascene indicates when he says "Lord is He who is the Word, eternal creator; and Jesus is the temporal who came into being. And our phrase 'The only begotten Son of His Father before all times', is in apposition to 'Lord' which is the Word, and not to 'Jesus' which is the humanity derived from Mary. And because this is so, it is absurd to say that Jesus who is human, who was taken from Mary, is eternal from of old, creator, begotten of His Father before all times and uncreate."<sup>2</sup> But it must be remembered that this was an argument used against those who said that if Christ was God, and if He died, then God must have died.<sup>3</sup> The form of Eliyya's answer might be criticized as indicating a dual personality in Christ, but was in reality only directed to the rebuttal of an argument which ignored the unique fact of the Incarnation, which

<sup>1</sup> *De Hæresibus*, Migne : *Pat. Græc.*, 94, 740.

<sup>2</sup> Cheikho : *Trois Traité*s, p. 36 quoted by Browne : *Eclipse of Christianity in Asia*.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Hazm : *Al Fisal*, i. 48.

allows for a human birth and a human death just as it allows for a human body.

The *Synopsis* of Theodore's doctrine preserved in a Syriac version by the Nestorians<sup>1</sup> speaks of Christ "fashioning to Himself a body",<sup>2</sup> putting on our humanity,<sup>3</sup> and "He clothed Himself with a body from the Virgin."<sup>4</sup> This might mean that Christ put on human guise but was not truly man, but the School of Antioch while using some terms ambiguously did insist on the humanity of Christ. Both Theodore and Diodorus taught against Apollinaris the complete manhood of Christ, with a reasonable soul and flesh and laid stress on the development of His human nature and His growth in knowledge. Gregory of Nazianzus<sup>5</sup> also maintains the reality and perfection of Christ's human nature. He points out the human experiences of Christ according to the Gospels, e.g., His suffering temptation, His grief, and His experience of forsakenness. Again, he asserts the importance of holding that there was a reasonable soul in Christ. If Theodore had not much the same idea of Christ how could he conceive the union in the Incarnation as one of "goodwill", or how could he argue that there was a co-operation of wills between the Father and the Son?<sup>6</sup> It will be seen therefore that if isolated passages are taken from the various theologians these may not give a true account of their doctrine, and since the Incarnation is a unique and ineffable mystery, we should have patience with those who seek a form of words in which to express what they understand by it. For instance, in a careful theologian like Gregory of Nyssa, who is most precise in his choice of language, we have the use of *μίγησ* and *κράτησ* to describe the union of humanity and divinity in the Incarnate Lord, terms which might be argued to mean a nature compounded of the two, and which have been considered to tend to Monophysitism. This might also find support from Gregory's theory that there was a progressive unity in Christ, with the human nature gradually transmuted into the divine until the ascension, when the human ceased to function and lost its characteristics. But again, this latter statement was directed to a particular point, namely a rebuttal of the Apollinarian notion that the *assumptus homo* would result in a quaternity instead of the Holy Trinity.<sup>7</sup>

It seems fair to suggest, therefore, that in the Incarnation the

<sup>1</sup> Transd. Mingana, 1920.

<sup>2</sup> *Synopsis*, Quest. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Quest. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Quest. 23.

<sup>5</sup> *Antirrh. adv. Apollinarius*, 11, 14, 24, 32.

<sup>6</sup> *Synopsis*, Quest. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Other illustrations can be gathered from *The Chronicle of Zachariah of Mitylene*, pp. 84 ff, etc., of how the statements of Athanasius, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Cæsarea and others were used by the Syrian author in a Monophysite sense. (*Vide* edition by Hamilton and Brooks, Methuen, 1899.) The warning against discursive quotation is to be remembered also when we quote Muslims.

Christian theologian is dealing with something completely unique. In the very nature of the case mediation requires that there should be a unity in the mediating link, and that in this unity the linked terms should be properly represented in their real nature. But if humanity is properly described as "in the image of God", real humanity, which is one of the linked terms, will only be realized in any sense by union with God and only realized completely in the unity represented in the Incarnation. The humanity of which we ordinarily have experience is the humanity which has upon it the marks of schism, whereas the humanity of the Incarnate Lord is perfect humanity immediate to divinity in an unbroken unity. Thus it is the fact of the unity which gives the unique character to anything we can say of the divinity or the humanity in the Incarnate Christ, and which makes it so difficult to speak about the humanity of Christ using only the ideas borrowed from our imperfect experience. We feel, therefore, that the union must be between real humanity and real divinity ; that anything which impairs the complete unity or takes away reality from the elements which constitute the unity must be utterly repudiated. When *μίλις* and *κράτος* are used by the Cappadocians,<sup>1</sup> the reality of the union (or rather unity) is in view though the terms must be inadequate ; when the transmutation of the human is referred to, it is with a true instinct that the temporal cannot be imposed upon the eternal ; the "humanity ceasing to function" cannot possibly refer to laying down the unchangeable priesthood (Heb. vii. 24) by the High Priest touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. iv. 15), but must refer to humanity in a secondary sense as the physical organism, or to the transition from the state of humiliation to the state of exaltation ; when it is insisted that Christ had a rational soul,<sup>2</sup> the reality of the manhood is at issue. In brief we may say that such a view of the humanity of Christ as we have indicated is borne out by the fact that He is the Second Adam, the express Image of God, the High Priest who has entered into the Holy of Holies,<sup>3</sup> the Heavenly Man.<sup>4</sup> Similarly when Theodore denies that it was God who was born of Mary,<sup>5</sup> this is not because it is held that Christ became God subsequently, but because the real humanity is thought to be brought into question and this is made clear when he admits the title Theotokos for the Virgin because God indwelt Him who was born.<sup>6</sup> When it is said by the same writer, that if it is asserted that the Word became flesh this must be said of appearance only, the conception which is denied is that what took place in the incarnation is simply the meta-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gregory of Nazianzus : *Orat.*, xxxvii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Clement : *Pæd.*, i. 2, 4 and i. 9, 85.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Clement : *Stromateis*, v. 6, 32.

<sup>4</sup> Clement : *Pæd.*, i. 12, 93.

<sup>5</sup> *De Incarn.* Migne : *Pat. Græc.*, lxvi. 997.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 992.

morphosis of the Word into a physical organism.<sup>1</sup> It will be seen that the interpretation of the doctrine of a particular theologian must not be made to depend on an isolated passage but must be taken in conjunction with the whole of the exposition he presents, even when it is admitted that such passages may be loosely expressed. If this is admitted then it will be seen that in all, real unity, real divinity, real humanity are believed to be vital in the Incarnation of the Word and it is by these elements that mediation is established between God and man.

When we turn to the Muslim writers we find that opposition to the Incarnation of the Word in Christ is stronger than power to resist the infiltration of theories of incarnation. Alongside an uncompromising denial of that idea of incarnation which early Islam is wishful to father upon Christianity, and which finds expression in such statements as that of Al Ash'ari, "God has taken to Himself no female companion",<sup>2</sup> there are many forms of Islamic doctrine which it is difficult to describe in any other way than "incarnational". From this it must not be inferred that orthodox Islam did not stand firm by its denial, with a few notable exceptions which we shall mention. But in the very earliest days we have evidence of movements of thought which reveal a reluctance to part with ideas foreign to the Qur'an, or only to be found in the Qur'an by specious interpretation.

It is remarkable to find in early Islam an adoptianist doctrine of the person of Christ. Ahmad b. Hā'it (or Hābit),<sup>3</sup> a disciple of An Nazzām who was usually classed as a Mu'tazilite and is to be dated about the middle of the ninth century A.D., shows distinct signs of the influence of Christianity. In regard to the person of Christ he is adoptianist. Baghdādi says that both Ibn Hā'it and Fadl ul Hadathī declared there were two lords and two creators. "One of these was from eternity and He is Allah; the other is created and He is 'Isā son of Mariam. Both of them said that Christ was the Son of God in the sense of adoption and not birth. They also said that Christ is He who will judge creation on the last day and that God referred to Him when He said, 'And thy Lord comes with the Angels, rank on rank' (Sura lxxxix. 23); it is He who will come 'in the shadow of a cloud' (Sura ii. 206), and it is He who created Adam after His own likeness, for that is the explanation of the saying that God created a god after his likeness." It is to be noted that Ibn Hā'it rejected the plural "angels" in Sura lxxxix. 23 and read the singular. This, he said, referred to the Christ. Baghdadī classifies the Hā'ites with those anthropomorphists who liken the essence of God to the essence of others, as distinct from those who

<sup>1</sup> *De Incarn.* Migne: Pat. Graec., 981.

<sup>2</sup> Spitta: *Zur Geschichte al Ash'aris*, 133.

<sup>3</sup> Shahrazānī: *Kitāb ul Milāl wa'n Nihāl*, 42; Baghdadī: *Farg.*, Pt. III, Cap. viii and Pt. IV, Cap. xiii.

liken God's attributes to the attributes of others. Ibn Hā'it also identified Christ pre-incarnate with the Primal Intellect. Other passages which were used by him to support his case that Christ was a creator and lord were Sura v. 110, where the story of Christ's creating birds by " permission of God " is told, and Sura vi. 159, which speaks of " the Lord who shall come ".

Ibn Hā'it is also charged by al Baghdādī with holding to the belief in metempsychosis (*tanāsukh*) and the *Ghālāt*, i.e., the extreme sects of the Shi'ites, are accused by Shahrastānī of being unanimous in their belief both in *tanāsukh* and *hulūl*.<sup>1</sup> Hujwīrī in his *Kashf ul Maḥyūb*<sup>2</sup> says that all Christians believe in this doctrine also. The reference in this case is to a form of *tanāsukh* which implies that the divine spirit is incarnate in men. The basis of the charge against the Christians is probably the insistence on the scriptural testimony that God breathed His spirit into man or the doctrine of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Christian could retort with Quranic evidence for the former, since the spirit of God is said to have been breathed into Mary (Sura xxi. 91) whereby she conceived and brought forth Jesus. It is also said that when God created man He breathed His spirit into him, " He fashioned him and breathed into him of His spirit " (Sura xxxii. 8 and also Sura xv. 29 and Sura xxxviii. 72). In accord with this, it is not surprising to find that the Janāhites held that God's spirit was incarnate in Adam and afterwards in Seth,<sup>3</sup> or to find that the Shurai'ites considered that God was embodied in five corporeal beings, namely, Muhammad, 'Alī, Fāṭima, Hasan and Husayn.<sup>4</sup> Something of the same sort is to be found in the teaching of Abū Ḥulmān ud Dimashqī, who said that God was embodied in beautiful persons ; and so we find Baghdādī quoting it as his argument that the Angels worshipped Adam because God had breathed His spirit in him and so God was embodied in Adam.<sup>5</sup> There seems to have been some sort of an idea that such an interpretation of the imparting of God's spirit would mean that the divine was divided. A crude form of this idea is condemned when Abū Mansūr ul 'Ijli (early eighth century A.D.) is repudiated for his claim that he was *Al Kisf*, " the fragment of the sky falling down " spoken of in Sura lii. 44.<sup>6</sup>

We find similar approximations to incarnation doctrine in some of the theories about the Prophet Muhammad. Thus the Mufawwidites, another of the extreme Shi'ite sects, are said to have believed that God first created Muhammad and then committed to him the rule of the world. It is Muhammad and not Allah who brought the universe into

<sup>1</sup> *Kitāb ul Milāl wa'n Niḥāl* (Cureton), i. 132.

<sup>2</sup> P. 260 ff. (translated by Nicholson). Gibb Memorial Series.

<sup>3</sup> Baghdādī : *Farq*, Pt. IV, Cap. vi.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. IV, Cap. ix, and *Milāl*, I. 134.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. IV, Cap. x.

<sup>6</sup> Shahrastānī : *Milāl*, I, 136 (Cureton).

existence. Later 'Ali became the vicegerent of Muhammad.<sup>1</sup> In quite early days we find the concept of *al Haqīqat ul Muhammadiyya*, which is the idea that the first individuation from the Divine Essence is the Principle of Muhammad. Similarly the emanation of Light is used in exposition of the person of Muhammad. Kumayt (d. 743) taught that Light proceeded through Adam by Muhammad to 'Ali. That there is a heavenly Light which proceeds from God to the '*Aql*' and to the *Nafs* and illumines all saints is the doctrine of the mystic Sahl ut Tustari (d. 896), who thus prepares the way for the carrying over of the concept of the *Nūr Muhammadi* into the mysticism of the Sunnis in a later period. The divinity of Muhammad was held by the sect variously called *Muhammadiyya* and *Mīmīyya* which followed the teaching of Al Faiyād b. 'Ali who was executed for heresy towards the end of the ninth century A.D.<sup>2</sup>

The divinity of 'Ali was most uncompromisingly taught later than his period, but if the Nusayrites legitimately trace their origin to Ibn Nusayr (middle of the ninth century A.D.) we have the roots of this belief, in emanation theories propounded by him. Huart says that he taught that 'Ali was the first person in a trinity.<sup>3</sup>

There were many exponents of the doctrine of *hulūl* and many varieties of the doctrine. The term could be used to cover the adventition of an accident to a *suppositum*, the indwelling of spirit in a body, the relation of the active intellect to individual men, and the indwelling of divinity in humanity. The heretical thought is discussed usually under the heading of "Hulūlites" in the heresiologies, but it should not be assumed that this refers to a definite sect. Evidently in the opinion of Shahrastānī *tanāsukh* and *hulūl* have much in common, but many who did not believe in metempsychosis could yet be charged with believing in the divine indwelling. For instance, Bayān b. Sam'ān at Tamimi is described as *hulūli*. He was burned in A.D. 737 for asserting that Sura iii. 132 referred to himself and that he was "the clear statement". Mansūr ul Ḥallāj is accused of the same heresy because he declared "I am Creative Truth" in an ecstatic experience of mystic union and because in his doctrine he proclaimed the indwelling of divinity (*lāhūt*) in humanity (*nāsūt*) or, according to Baghdādī, because he said, "He who amends his condition by obedience, who forsakes pleasures and lust, rises to the sphere of God's beloved. He shall then not fail to keep pure but will scale the ladder of the purified until he is released from the fetters of the flesh. When there no longer remains one atom of his corporeal qualities in him, the spirit of God

<sup>1</sup> Baghdādī : *Farg*, Pt. IV, Cap. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Friedländer : *Heterodoxies of the Shi'ites* (acdg. to Ibn Hazm), Pt. I, 97 and Pt. II, 102-103.

<sup>3</sup> Art. 'Ali, *Encyc. of Islam*, i. 285. See also Massignon : *Nusairī* in *Encycl. of Islam*, and Shahrastānī : *Milal*, i. 132 (Cureton).

which was incarnate in Jesus the Son of Mary will reside in Him. In that condition there will be fulfilled what he has desired as soon as he desires it, and every act of his will be divine." It will be seen by the illustrations given that even in the case of Ḥallāj the idea of *ḥulūl* might be thought to range from an identification with the divine to the thought of an indwelling of the Spirit of God in another sense altogether.<sup>1</sup>

The Islamic theorists betray confusion of thought with regard to the corporeality of the soul, which makes them consider that there is some fragmentation of the divine when the indwelling of the Divine Spirit is operative, and also with regard to the implication of divine corporeality from the doctrine of the incarnation. Thus we find classed together those who believe in incarnation and those who believe in the corporeality of God,<sup>2</sup> and so both represent the aberration of extreme anthropomorphism.<sup>3</sup> Sabbābites who call 'Ali God, Bayānites who say that the divinity is a person of light and has limbs in human form which will, with the exception of His face, pass away, Hulūlites and Hishāmītes are all set side by side with little recognition that there might be those who believed in the indwelling of God and yet utterly and absolutely repudiated the corporeality of God as indeed was the case with many, even if we do not include among them the outstanding case of the Christians who believe in the Incarnation of the Word and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and deny completely the corporeality of God.

It might also be pointed out that some of the greatest exponents of the doctrine of *Tawhīd* among the mystics of Islam, even when they have rejected *ḥulūl* in express terms, have still taught the divine indwelling,<sup>4</sup> speaking of the perfect man as the temple of God and of the tabernacling of God with man :

"He<sup>5</sup> looked to find the world His Image yield  
And so set up His tent in Adam's field."

And following the Christian scriptures (1 Cor. iii. 16, etc.), Christians have spoken of the indwelling of God in man when incarnation cannot be in question at all, though it has been already seen that in partial interpretation of the Incarnation of the Word the idea of indwelling has been used. Thus, basing on such passages as John ii. 19, John

<sup>1</sup> Massignon : *Kitāb ut Tawāṣīn* should be consulted for a fuller account of the mystical philosophy and religious experience of Ḥallāj. See also Baghdādī : *Farg*, Pt. IV, Cap. x. For a list of sects charged with belief in *ḥulūl* see *Encyc. of Islam*, art. *Hulūl* by Massignon.

<sup>2</sup> Baghdādī : *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. viii.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also Shahrastānī : *Milal*, i. 132 (Cureton), where Jews and Christians are lumped together in undiscriminating fashion.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Maṭnawī* of Jalāl ud Dīn Rūmī, ii. 1183 ff. (Nicholson's ed.).

<sup>5</sup> Ḥāfiẓ : *Lisān ul Ghayb*, Ghazal No. 60 *Radīf i Dāl*.

i. 14, Prov. ix. 1, the School of Antioch spoke of the Humanity of Christ as "the temple", "the tabernacle" and "the house".<sup>1</sup>

While it is not specifically related to the doctrine of Incarnation, it is fitting that in this place brief mention should be made of the influence of Messianism on Islamic doctrine. Muhammad Iqbāl has recognized that there is a special influence of Messianic ideas on the doctrine of Islam, even while he seeks to expurgate it from fundamental Islam, maintaining that it "had reappeared in Islam under the pressure of Magian thought".<sup>2</sup> Iqbāl is probably right in considering that the idea of the Promised Mahdi is an accretion in Islam, but so many things are accretions that this one is not to be dismissed, and even if the doctrine of the Mahdi is not Quranic, the doctrine of the second advent of Jesus is to be found in the Qur'ān, and the Mahdi has often been identified with Jesus, e.g., by Muṭahhar. The now fairly well-developed doctrine of the Mahdi found among the Sunnis is certainly of late growth and can hardly be said to belong to the period of which we are writing at all. Nevertheless at an extremely early date we find the Shi'ite schism deriving consolation from the thought of a realized or expected advent of the rightly-guided Imām. We might conjecture that the first resort to such an idea rose out of a sense of frustration and incompleteness at the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Even the Qur'ān was not collected according to Zuhri. The problem of the succession rent early Islam, and so many men looked for one who would prove the worthy leader of the community and establish the theocracy by completely satisfying victory. It is not surprising if in such a case Jewish and Christian apocalyptic, familiar to so many of the people in the newly-won countries, should have turned the thoughts of the dissatisfied to hopes of a future and nearly imminent parousia. Macdonald suggests this probability.<sup>3</sup> However that may be, in the early sects of the Kaisānites, Khashabites and Kuraibites, which rose at the close of the first century of the Muhammadan era, we find not only the expectation of the Mahdi but the belief that he had come in the person of Muhammad b. Al Hanafiya (c. A.D. 685). Later, this was to develop into various forms of the doctrine of the Hidden Imām. It is interesting to note that Margoliouth<sup>4</sup> suggests as an origin for the name Mahdi, the derivation of which is in much doubt, a root which means "to give", which would yield the meaning for *mahdi*, "one to whom has been given". This Margoliouth refers to Matt. xxviii. 16. It is possible also to relate the word to *hadīya*, meaning "offering", and the term could yield the meaning "offered", which might have a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Clement: *Ped.*, i. 9, 81, and the *haikal* of Jili in his *Al Insān ul Kāmil*, *passim*, specially Vol. II, p. 46. See also Nicholson: *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, pp. 84-85.

<sup>2</sup> *Six Lectures*, p. 200 f. (Lahore).

<sup>3</sup> Art. *Enc. Islām*: *Malāhim*.

<sup>4</sup> *E.R.E.*, viii. 337 ff.

relation to Christian apocalyptic ideas of the "slain Lamb". These can only be conjectures, and the generally accepted view is that the term means "the guided one".

#### D. LOGOS DOCTRINE, PROPHECY AND SCRIPTURE

##### (I) LOGOS DOCTRINE

In Christianity the Logos doctrine was fully established with the warrant of Scripture, and the special application of the doctrine was to the person of Christ. But it must not be assumed that this was the only form that the doctrine could take when applied theologically. The term *Logos* could mean the reasoning mind, purpose and the uttered word; it could be identified with the Aristotelian Intellect, with the World-Soul of the Stoics and with the Platonist concept of the Good. To the Jew it could be the term whereby the divine presence in nature and in man could be expressed. It could be identified with the Shekinah, and it served to translate the term *Memra*, and so was linked to all the Old Testament and Jewish apocryphal usage of the concept of the Word of God. The Targums reveal how gradually the idea of the Word as mediator between God and man arose. There was an early association of the Logos with Wisdom and the personalization of the latter in Proverbs led to a similar personification of the Word, for which a number of passages of Scripture lent support. The passages which were usually quoted were Ps. xxxiii. 6, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made"; Ps. cvii. 20, "He sent His word and healed them"; the epiphany of the word in Isa. lv. 10-11; *Wisdom* xviii. 15, "Thine almighty word leaped from heaven from the royal throne", which Charles thinks may have been written with 1 Chron. xxi. 16 in mind; *Wisdom* ix. 1, "Who madest all things by thy word and by thy wisdom formedst man". Other passages in Jewish Apocrypha are: *Slavonic Enoch* (first version) xxxiii. 4, "My thought is my counsellor my wisdom and my word are made", and in the second version, "My word is deed"; *Syriac Baruch* xxi. 4; *Sirach* xvii. 4,<sup>1</sup> "He also vouchsafed them the gift of understanding (*nous*) and a seventh, the *logos*, the interpreter of His powers." *Memra* occurs many times in the *Targum of Onkelos* and the *Jerusalem Targum*, and 320 times in *Pseudo-Jonathan* as representative of God Himself, e.g., Onkelos: Gen. xv. 6, "He believed in the *Memra* of Yahweh"; Exod. xxxi. 13, "Between my *Memra* and you". The use is generally to avoid anthropomorphism and to bring God into relation with men. The phrase "for the sake of His *Memra*" in Isa. xlvi. 11 (comparable with the Quranic phrase, "for the sake of His Face"), and God's swearing by His *Memra* in

<sup>1</sup> *Cod. Vat.*, 248.

Num. xiv. 35 are significant. In *Syriac Baruch* x. 1 and the *Hebrew fragments of a Zadokite work*, edited by Charles (x. 28) the word is equivalent to prophecy. "The *Memra* is the Deity revealed in its activity, just as the *shekinah* and *ikārā* represent the divine majesty and glory."<sup>1</sup> This wide diversity ranging from predominantly Hellenistic ideas to purely Semitic, results in a corresponding variety in doctrine and is in the background of various Muslim conceptions.

In Christianity the *Logos* as the principle of revelation is identified with Christ, in whom revelation comes to its fullness (John i). Thus in Clement the *Logos* is the divine consciousness which is disclosed in Christ the Son.<sup>2</sup> God was never without His Word, and without the Word was nothing made that hath been made. The heavenly hierarchies, principalities and powers of the spiritual world, the whole cosmic system, the history of mankind, all originated by this transcendent purpose and consciousness of God and never cease to be guided and directed thereby. The unfolding of the spiritual in man is by the operation of the divine reason and the whole human race partakes of the *Logos*. The Alexandrians maintained that God begot before all creation a rational power scripturally revealed by the Holy Spirit as "Glory of the Lord", "Son", "Wisdom", "Angel", "God", "Lord" and "*Logos*".<sup>3</sup> Even the Qur'ān declared that Christ was *Kalimat Ullāh*, Word of God.

Did the doctrine of the Muslims find an origin in Christian doctrine? Guillaume thinks that because, according to John of Damascus in his *Disputatio*, it was even in his days a heresy for Muslims to believe that the Word was created, the *Logos* idea could not have been borrowed by the Muslims from the Damascene. That may be true and yet, as we have already pointed out, the idea of the Word may have been borrowed from Christianity or may have been due to reactions against Christianity, for there were borrowing and reaction before the days of the Damascene. It is interesting, at any rate, that the Mu'tazilites considered that the doctrine that the Word was uncreated was a violation of the Divine Unity. Discussing the early history, a Muslim writer<sup>4</sup> says, "The Mu'tazila said that as an attribute of God it was eternal, but that the words which descended on Muhammad were created and originated. The traditionalists (*muhaddithūn*) said that the Word was in every respect eternal. Pressed to the finest point, the conclusion of both is the same, but both parties made the matter a criterion of Faith and Unbelief. Imām Baihaqī in his '*Kitāb ul Asmā wa Sifāt*' gives certain references on the matter which we here produce. Ibn ul Jarrāḥ said, 'The person who thinks the Qur'ān is originated is

<sup>1</sup> Suffrin: *ERE*, art. *Memra*.

<sup>2</sup> Strom., iv. 25, 156.

<sup>3</sup> Justin: *Dial. with Trypho* Cap. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Shibli: 'Ilm ul Kalām, 24 f.

an unbeliever.' Yazid b. Harāwan said, 'The one who says God's word is created is by Allah! a *zindiq*.' Muzani, a disciple of Shāfi'i said, 'The one who says the Qur'ān is created is an infidel.' Imām Bukhārī's words are, 'I have seen the statements of Jews, Christians and Magians, but none of these is so ignorantly unbelieving as the Jahmiya. I deem him to be an ignoramus who does not consider the Jahmiya to be unbelieving.' And 'Abd ur Rahmān b. Mahdi's words show how far intolerance could go, 'If there were a sword in my hand and I heard someone saying on the bridge that the Qur'ān was created I would cut off his head.' Some traditionalists, among whom Bukhārī is outstanding, made a certain distinction in their statement of belief in the eternity of the Qur'ān. They said that the wording or pronunciation of the Qur'ān was created, and had a *beginning*, but the others vehemently opposed this view. We are told that when one of Bukhārī's teachers heard what he had said, he made this comment, 'No one is permitted to be of our company who says, "*Lafzū bi'l Qur'ān makhlūqun*", i.e., the pronunciation of the Qur'ān is created. And according to one writer, when this phrase was placed before Ibn Ḥanbal, he struck his pen through it and said, 'The Qur'ān is in every way uncreated'. However, Abū Tālib had reported him as having declared that the pronunciation was created. On hearing this Ibn Ḥanbal trembled with anger and sending for Abū Tālib, demanded to know what he had to say for himself. That is one side of the case. On the other side the Mu'tazila considered that to call the Qur'ān eternal was infidelity.'

This controversy rose at a very early date, with the orthodox insisting on the eternity and the Mu'tazilites on the created character of the Qur'ān. The Murjites were not unanimous as to whether the Qur'ān was created or not, some said one thing and some another. Some sat on the fence and declared, "We do not say that it is created and we do not say that it is not created."<sup>1</sup> The doctrine which emerged at last was, "that speech is an eternal attribute of God, which as such had no beginning and never ceases to be, any more than His knowledge, His might, or the other characteristics of His everlasting being. What then is recognized as the activity of the speaking God, namely, His revelation, had no beginning in time by special creative act of God's will, but has existed from all eternity, and, of course, for a Muslim 'revelation' meant *par excellence* the Qur'ān."<sup>2</sup>

Wensinck considers that the denial of the eternity of the Qur'ān must have been a natural consequence of the denial of the other eternal attributes. The problems which faced the early Muslims were many and important. The Qur'ān itself was a standing witness to the fact that God was a Speaker. Here we have the *ipsissima verba* of

<sup>1</sup> Al Ash'ari : *Maqālāt*, i. 153.

<sup>2</sup> Goldziher : *Vorlesungen*, 113.

God. In the Qur'ān was the statement that Christ is the word of God. It must therefore have been incumbent on and to the advantage of the early Muslims to try to put another interpretation on this, and to deny that Christ was to be identified with the *Logos*. This could be most safely accomplished by a transfer of the *Logos* doctrine from the Incarnate Word to something similar to the mediating word of Philo, where there is retained the concept of mediation while the personal word is rejected. Many early polemists seem to have been able to argue their Muslim opponents to a standstill when they contended that God must have a word. How could the Muslim do anything else but accept such a statement? The Qur'ān was God's word, the Jews had a doctrine of the divine Torah, the philosophers had their idea of the divine *Logos*. So how could they go against this seeming consensus of opinion? The only reply they could make had to be the formulation of a doctrine utilizing such materials as they might find convenient to their purpose from Jewish and Christian sources, and which, because certain of a partial acceptance by both Jews and Christians, would enable them to take a stronger position in case of argument. Christians could be counted upon to admit that the divine word had come to the prophets and so could the Jews. Except for such ideas as are to be found common to these two, it is doubtful whether the Muslims were able to formulate an original doctrine of the divine word, and whether they have succeeded in doing so satisfactorily to the present day. The gradual prevalence of the unorthodox doctrine that the Qur'ān is created is an evidence of this failure.

In justification of these strictures many things can be pointed out. Even the controversy as to the eternity or otherwise of the word is an echo of earlier controversies. We have already seen that there was, for instance, controversy arising in Antioch probably through the assertion by Paul of Samosata that the *Logos* was created. If it be said that this applied to the "personal" *Logos* and not to a word of revelation, we can point to the doctrine of the eternal gospel which Origen held, and it is true that there are some elements in the early Muslim theories which point to a tendency to interpret the *Logos* as an eternal *Torah* rather than as an eternal personal principle in the Godhead. This was in line with the data supplied in the Qur'ān and the closer affinity to Semitic ideas, and also consonant with the denial of the incarnation. According to Ibn Ishāq and Ibn Hishām in their accounts of the life of the Prophet, at the very outset of the prophetic mission when questions were being asked as to what could have happened in the experience of Muhammad and what interpretation could be put upon it, Waraqā explained it as the coming of the "greatest *Nāmūs*" (*nomos*) who came to Moses, and by this Muhammad had become a prophet. Though Tabari explains the *Nāmūs* as the Angel Gabriel, the terms are most suggestive. One point of interest is the

apparent personalizing of the *Nāmūs* which Nyberg and Tor Andrae refer to the Pseudo-Clementine literature, and which we find later in the *Risā'il* of the *Ikhwān us Safā*. We would suggest, however, that the personalization may have been more pictorial than otherwise, and that what is far more significant in this is the early suggestion of the transcendent *Torah*, which was not unfamiliar to the Jews under the instruction of Philo. In Philo, *Logos* and Law are identified.<sup>1</sup> The Law as preceptive and verbal was only a projection "into the material medium of nouns and verbs", its source being the *Logos-Nomos* of God. This *Nomos* is considered to have a fixity and permanence only second to that of God Himself,<sup>2</sup> and is incorruptible. The written law commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong, and, in particular, the Pentateuch, was simply "the divine *Logos* resolved into *logoi*".<sup>3</sup> A distinction of the body and soul of the Law<sup>4</sup> anticipates a similar distinction in Islam of the word as an incorporeal reality (*kalām ma'nawī*) and the verbal word (*kalām lafzī*). In another place Philo associates *ρῆμα* with the *Logos* idea in a way which is foreign altogether to Greek thought and is more closely related to the conception of written revelation as held by the Jews.<sup>5</sup> Further, not only are these points in Philo suggestive but we have already discussed the idea of the Heavenly Tablets in the Jewish writers and their counterpart in the "Preserved Tablet" in Muslim dogmatics, which makes concrete the idea of a transcendent writing, the archetype or heavenly repository of the Law which appears in the plane of manifestation.<sup>6</sup> Similarly there is the notion of a heavenly source of the Scripture in the *Ummū'l Kitāb*. Among other suggestive points is the mythology of the "Pen" (*qalam*), which is invoked in Sura lxviii, and which is said in the *Hadīth* to be the first creation of God, significantly sharing that dignity with the Intellect ('*aql*).

Such applications of the *Logos* concept would commend themselves to the early Muslim thinkers if, as seems probable, they were acquainted with them, because by using them it would be possible to retain *Logos* doctrine without the embarrassment of the Christian application to the person of Christ and to the Incarnation.

Accordingly, the main point in this aspect of the Muslim *Logos* doctrine is the principle that the word is the vehicle of revelation. For the self-expression of the Divine and for the operation of His will there is a transcendent word which contains the decrees in the Preserved Tablet, which is also itself transcendent having its counter-

<sup>1</sup> *Præm. et Pœn.*, ix. (ii. 417); *Migrat. Abrah.*, 23 (i. 456).

<sup>2</sup> See *Ebbret.*, 35 (i. 379), also Eusebius *Præ. Ev.*, 7, 13, and note the significant passages *Sonr.*, ii. 33 and 36 (i. 688 and 690).

<sup>3</sup> Drummond: *Philo Judæus*, ii. 308.

<sup>4</sup> *Migrat. Ab.* 16 (i. 451).

<sup>5</sup> *SS. Ab. et Cain*, 3 (i. 165) and also *Leg. All.*, i. 9 (i. 47).

<sup>6</sup> *Vide supra*, Vol. I, 25 f.

part in the sphere of manifestation in the written and recited Qur'ān. This transcendent word is mysteriously one. The word manifested is in words and letters. Thus the form in which the Muslim represents the divine purpose is in the conception of eternal decrees which find their embodiment in the Qur'ān. It is thus that the Qur'ān receives the impress of the two-nature theory previously evolved in the explanation of the person of Christ. It is to be observed that this two-nature theory appears also in Philo. His idea is that the *Logos* stands between God and man partaking of both divine and human natures. In this connexion he calls the *Logos* the prophet,<sup>1</sup> the supplicator, priest and possibly even paraclete.<sup>2</sup> The *Logos* becomes the heavenly man as mediator, the man whose name is Dayspring.<sup>3</sup> But Islam cannot permit such a personalization at this point and brings it back only in a new formulation of the doctrine of the prophet-mediator.

Baghdādī says that Ibn Karrām, one of the early heresiarchs, drew a distinction between the ideas that God was a Speaker (*mutakallim*), and that He was a Sayer (*qā'il*), and a corresponding distinction between "word" and "utterance." God has always been both a Speaker and a Sayer. He has always been a Speaker because of a word which is His power to utter, and He is eternally a Sayer because of a faculty to utter and because of the utterance. This faculty to utter is His power to utter, His *qā'ilīya*, and His utterance is consonants originated by Him. The utterance of God, therefore, according to the Karramites, is created and His word eternal.<sup>4</sup>

That we should have before Islam anything approaching the Muslim doctrine of the transcendent unity of God's speech seems to be most unlikely, and yet we have this distinctly in Philo. He postulates a differentiation between the Word and the utterance.<sup>5</sup> Here is introduced the idea of prophecy.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes philosophy is equated with prophecy as the communication of this speech or utterance. The conception seems to be that the transcendent Word becomes articulate by the mouth of the prophet or the philosopher,<sup>7</sup> which reminds us of what Ibn Miskawaih had to say.<sup>8</sup> It is not that God "utters", but rather that utterance is given to men. Commenting on Ps. lxi. 11 (LXX version), "Once the Lord spake; these two things I heard",

<sup>1</sup> *Cong. Erud. Gr.*, 30 (i. 543).

<sup>2</sup> *Quis Rerum Div. Heres.*, 42 (i. 502).

<sup>3</sup> *Conf. Ling.*, 14 (i. 414); see *Zach.* vi. 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Farg.*, Pt. III, Cap. vii; also in Cap. viii under the heading of "Those who liken God's word to the word of His creatures." . . . "Some hold that it consists of sounds and letters, just a human speech." "Karramites say that utterance as distinct from the speech of God is of the same species as the sounds and consonants of men."

<sup>5</sup> *Leg. All.*, iii. 60–61 (i. 121–22).

<sup>6</sup> *SS. Ab. et Cain*, 26 (i. 180).

<sup>7</sup> *Post Cain*, 30 (i. 244).

<sup>8</sup> *Vide supra*, Vol. I, 170 ff.

Philo gives an exposition which should be compared with the dogma of the unity of God's speech in Islam. "The word 'once' refers to what is uncompounded, a monad or a unit, while 'twice' refers to what is compounded (composite). . . . God speaks in uncomposed units, for speech is not for Him a body of air . . . but is incorporeal."<sup>1</sup> Incidentally it may be pointed out that the last idea is easily translatable as *kalām ma'nauī*, and that John of Damascus has a passage representing similar ideas, "Our word is not destitute of spirit—breath. . . . It is this which in the moment of utterance becomes the articulate word, revealing in itself the power of the Word."<sup>2</sup> In another rather mysterious passage<sup>3</sup> about the inaudibility of God's voice, Philo dissociates it from verbs and nouns. Yet Philo has the same implication of denial of anything beside God which renders some of the doctrines of an eternal word and an eternal tablet so perplexing. Before creation there was nothing with God, and after the creation of the universe there is nothing that can possibly be considered his peer.<sup>4</sup> The quandary in which this places those who seek to explain it is well illustrated by the contradictory theory attributed to the Za'farānites by Baghdādī,<sup>5</sup> that God's word is not of His essence, and whatever is outside God's essence is created, but that nevertheless a dog was to be preferred to anyone who said that the word of God was created.

Another aspect of *Logos* doctrine which appears in Islam and which, though condemned in the one who seems to have used it first in theological exposition, has found a permanent place in Islamic thought, especially in the mystics, is the idea of the creative word. This is based on those passages in the Qur'ān where God is said to create by the word "Be" (*kun*). Abū Hudhayl said that the creative word *kun* is identical with creation. This creative word was, however, not to be thought as contained in a suppositum or hypostasis. The contrary idea is, of course, represented by John of Damascus, "God's Word is not as our word without a subsistence and dissolving in air, but having a subsistence in Him, and life and perfection, not proceeding *out of* Himself but always existing *in* Himself."<sup>6</sup> Baghdādī describes as the fifth heresy of Abū Hudhayl that he divided the words of Allah into that which needs a suppositum and that which does not need a suppositum. "Be" has no hypostasis when it is Allah's creative word. His other words have a beginning in some corporeal substance. Yet, says Baghdādī, all His words are considered by Abū Hudhayl to be accidents. Thus the creative "Be" is an accident without a sup-

<sup>1</sup> *Quod Deus Immut.*, 18 (i. 285).

<sup>2</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, I, vii. (P.G., 94, 804).

<sup>3</sup> *Migrat. Abrāh.*, 9 (i. 443-44).

<sup>4</sup> *Vide Leg. All.*, ii. 1 (i. 66).

<sup>5</sup> *Farg.*, Pt. III., Cap. v.

<sup>6</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, I, Cap. vi. (P.G., 94, 804).

positum, which is absurd.<sup>1</sup> It is doubtful whether Bağhdādī is properly representing Abū Hudhayl's thought, though it seems probable that Abū Hudhayl said that the legislative word of commands and prohibitions was in a suppositum in the sense of accident. This would be a scholastic exposition of what we have already seen in Philo's doctrine. However, in spite of condemnation of such notions the idea of the creative word lingers on in Islam and finds its support in sacred writ. In Philo also the word is the instrumental cause, and the organ of creation and even Creator.<sup>2</sup> God leads His great flock with Justice and Law, i.e., the two Powers, orders the four elements and all that is fashioned from them, the revolutions of the sun and moon, the dance of the stars, having set in authority over them His upright Word, His firstborn Son, who will receive the custody of this holy flock as a vicegerent of the Great King. Thus the Word is the will and purpose of God and "His words do not differ from acts": where we find unity again emphasized.<sup>3</sup>

We may legitimately conclude from the foregoing that on the Muslim side the Word of God, apart from later expositions which link it in some sort with the person of the prophet, becomes a transcendent impersonal principle which possesses a manifestational character as impressed by an angelic intermediary upon the prophet. This is in many respects a reversion to older ideas, and just as in the doctrine of God personal distinctions were ruled out, so in the doctrine of the word in Islam the tendency was to reject the personal.

## (II) PROPHETHOOD AND PROPHECY

When in the desire to gather data for a general statement of the theory of prophethood or prophecy in Islam one turns to the accounts of the presumably historical prophets in the Qur'ān or in Muslim tradition, there is inevitable disappointment that so little is specifically related to the prophecy of the Old Testament. The great prophets of Israel hardly appear, and when they do the picturesque details of their lives are the main points of interest. Outside the Qur'ān the mass of material is of a legendary and romantic character. If one consults Tabari's *Chronicle* or the *Stories of the Prophets* by Tha'labi one finds Semitic and other oriental myths, Jewish Talmud and Haggadah, legends of pre-Islamic Arabia, the Gilgamish epic, and the *Iskandar-nama* in most romantic and imaginative amplification of the Quranic narrative. The great books of the prophets of Israel, which are in most respects far more important even than their persons, have scant attention. For instance of the unsound basis provided for the Muslim theologian who might wish to start from historical facts rather than

<sup>1</sup> *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *De Agric. Noe* 12 (i. 308).

<sup>3</sup> *Sunn.* i. 31(i. 648).

from *a priori* theories, we could point to the figure of Luqmān who is a compound of Balaam, Ahikar and Aesop, or to Idrīs who seems to have started as Alexander the Great's cook<sup>1</sup> and then becomes inextricably mixed with the mythical Khidr (or Khadir), the prophet Elijah, and finally settles down to a complete identification with Enoch; in the course of which we have the Alexander Romance, solar myth, and Old Testament story.<sup>2</sup> The miraculous looms very large in these accounts. Job stamps on the ground to produce a spring; Daniel raises from the dead a thousand men who had been dead a thousand years; Jeremiah dies for a hundred years and then comes to life;<sup>3</sup> two clouds, one full of silver and one full of gold, replenish Job's store after his trials have ended; seven hundred virgins and twelve thousand men fall down dead in the ecstasy which David's sweet voice produced. There are other strange elements which are difficult to explain and which, when explained, throw no light on the real nature of prophethood. Thus Lot is altogether inexplicably exalted, and Abraham appears in the Meccan Suras of the Qur'ān in quite a different way from that in the Medina Suras. In the former he seems a genuine Old Testament figure and in the latter he becomes the founder of the Ka'aba and so apparently a prophet to the Arabs before Muhammad. It is usually accepted that every prophet is not a messenger (*rāsūl*), but every messenger or apostle must be a prophet. But even in such a matter as this we cannot be too sure. Wensinck holds<sup>4</sup> that this is the case but Horovitz<sup>5</sup> dissents, maintaining that Hūd and Sāliḥ are spoken of as "sent" in the Qur'ān, but not as prophets (*nābī*), and that prophets are only for the People of the Book until the Prophet Muhammad who is *ummī*, i.e., for the Gentiles. We have another interpretation of the difference between the prophet sent and the prophet not sent in Ibn Miskawaih.<sup>6</sup>

In the case of the Prophet Muhammad it is somewhat different, and while a theory of prophethood is practically impossible based on the miscellaneous information to be gathered about the other prophets from the Muslim literature, the experience of Muhammad and the elements which are considered to belong to his prophethood are held to be definitive, and all other prophethood is judged in comparison with his. It is, therefore, as if we had really no *general* doctrine of prophecy in Islam but a particular doctrine of the Prophethood of Muhammad, and an extension of the ideas thus obtained to other prophets. But the method adopted is not purely inductive. Certain

<sup>1</sup> Nöldeke: *Zeitschrift für Assyr.*, xvii. 84 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Encyc. Islām*, ii. 449 f.

<sup>3</sup> Sura ii. 261 is applied to him, cf. Jer. xxxix. 16.

<sup>4</sup> See *Encycl. of Islam* art. *Rāsūl*; Wensinck compares with this the distinction between prophet and apostle made in Christianity, *vide Chrysostom*; in Migne: *Pat. Graec.*, II. 92.

<sup>5</sup> See *Encycl. of Islam* art. *Nābī*, Vol. III, 802f.

<sup>6</sup> *Vide supra*, Vol. I, 180.

principles or leading ideas are first of all accepted and then, with or without scriptural warrant from the Qur'ān at least, it is assumed that the prophet fulfilled in himself these leading ideas. Thus, for instance, it is laid down that a prophet must perform miracles, and so, even in spite of such Quranic passages as Sura xxix. 49, xiii. 27–30 and xvii. 92–97, Muhammad must be a worker of miracles. At the period of which we are writing the full doctrine of the prophethood had not emerged, but in broad outline we have in the exposition of Ibn Miskawaih the form which this doctrine was to take. It is during this early period, however, that through tradition we find other and pre-Islamic conceptions of prophethood finding their way into the description of Muhammad.

The *kāhin* or soothsayer was a familiar personage to the Semitic people, but Muhammad was at pains to dissociate himself from such people. “The Prophet Muhammad disclaimed being a *kāhin* (Sura lii. 29, lxxix. 42; also passages like lxxxi. 22 *sqq.*). But his earliest appearance as a prophet reminds us strongly of the manner of these soothsayers. He was an ecstatic and had ‘true dreams’ like them; his *daimonion* (*sāhib*) was the (holy) spirit, whose place was taken by the angel Gabriel. His revelations are, like the utterances of the *kāhin*, composed in *saj'* (rhymed prose) and sometimes begin with the usual abstruse oaths; even the forms which he was still using for administering justice and settling disputes in Medina during the early years of his stay there correspond, in their main features, to those of the pagan *kāhin* and *hakam*.<sup>1</sup> The following brief account of the process of revelation or *wahī* according to the Quranic and traditional teaching will throw light on this statement. “It is not for man that God should speak to him but by *wahī*, or from behind a veil, or by sending an apostle to inspire by His permission what He will” (Sura xlvi. 50 f.). It is only once clearly stated in the Qur'ān that Gabriel was the medium in revelation, i.e., in Sura ii. 91. It is, however, considered that Suras xxvi. 192, liii. 5, xvi. 104 refer to Gabriel. Gabriel is sometimes thought to have come in the form of a man named Dihya, and support for this is found in Sura vi. 9. Dreams revealing hidden and secret things were regarded as part of the Prophet's inspiration, and in accord with this Ayesha hoped that the prophet would have a dream which would vindicate her.<sup>2</sup> Visions are mentioned in Suras liii. 3 ff. and lxxxi. 19 ff. Sometimes an objective appearance is described as visible not only to the Prophet but to those who were in his company at the time.<sup>3</sup> When asked how *wahī* came the Prophet once said, “Sometimes it comes to me in the form of a young man who hands it to me”.<sup>4</sup> The peculiar humming or twittering noise of the soothsayer

<sup>1</sup> *Encyc. of Islam*, art. *Kāhin* by Fischer, ii. 626.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Hishām: *Sūra*, 151, and *Bukhārī*: *Sahīh: Ta'bīr ur Ru'ya*, Bāb., 1, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Muslim: *Sahīh on Imān*, trad. 5, and *Tabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd, viii. 44, 46.

<sup>4</sup> *Nasā'i*: *Sunan*, Bk. XI, Bab. 37.

is spoken of in the Old Testament. Tirmidhi<sup>1</sup> relates the tradition that when Sura xxiii. 1 was given to the Prophet there was a sound like the humming of bees near to his face. Certain symptoms of oppression and even suffocation are mentioned in the traditions. Thus it is said that when Sura xcvi, the first revelation, was given to Muhammad and he was reluctant to take the charge, the angel visitant pressed him till he was nearly suffocated.<sup>2</sup> The sounds which the Prophet heard in the state of *wahī* so overawed him that he thought he was going to die.<sup>3</sup> On the coldest days he was observed to be sweating profusely. Other symptoms were flushing or paleness of face, snoring and "rattling like a young camel" recorded by both Muslim and Bulkārī. Ibn Hanbal records many things of interest: sometimes trance fell upon the Prophet, sometimes he would appear absent-minded and would take no heed to his surroundings, when *wahī* fell upon him there was an uncanny increase in his weight, so that Zaid b. Thābit told of one occasion, "When the *shekinah* fell upon him, his thigh fell on mine so heavily that I was afraid it would break", and when the *Surat ul Mā'ida* was revealed the Prophet happened at the time to be mounted on a camel, with the result that the beast was unable to bear him and he had to dismount.<sup>4</sup>

The most important product of the *wahī* of the Prophet was the Qur'ān, but there were some who agreed that all his sayings were to be classed as *wahī*; though in the latter case the inspiration was of a slightly inferior character but, even so, superior to *ilhām*. It will have been noticed that Ibn Miskawaih does not make many distinctions between Prophethood and Soothsaying. The chief difference seems to be that in the latter case states were to a certain extent self-induced. Nevertheless the soothsayer was not thought to be completely fraudulent. His coming was determined by a conjunction of stars approaching the figure which determined the coming of the Prophet. The astronomical elements are interesting. Ibn Miskawaih is, at any rate, concerned to bring the discussion of the nature and functions of prophethood into relation with other known and apparently accepted phenomena of an occult nature. Not only is this so, but he fits his theory of prophethood into the Neoplatonist scheme of procession and return. The active intellect is the lowest point of the descent so far as man, but man in himself is the meeting place of even lower elements of matter and sense which depends on physical organs. Nevertheless man is rising out of his inferior and flesh-bound self into the realm of pure reason. The philosopher laboriously climbing, but the prophet, specially assisted, is rapt, out of himself. This is the accom-

<sup>1</sup> *Sahīh*, 44 on Sura xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> Bulkārī: *Sahīh: Tafsīr ul Qur'ān* on Sura xvi.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Hanbal: *Musnad*, ii. 222.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 34 and 238 ff.; i. 464; ii. 176; iii. 21; iv. 222, 224; v. 184, 190 f., 317, 318, 320 f., 327 and vi. 34, 56, 58, 103, 158, 256 f., 455, 458, etc.

plishment of return (*rujū'*) in the Neoplatonist cycle. The result is not an aimless and theoretic gnosis, but the man who passes through this experience is perfected in knowledge and in practical reason also, i.e., in '*ilm*' and '*amal*'.

It seems to have been less urgent for Christians to formulate a doctrine of prophethood, and in the main the ideas they represent are common to the Jewish writers, which is as it should be, seeing that even for Christians the prophets were the prophets of the Old Testament, and prophecy in the Christian dispensation becomes preaching the Gospel. But as representative of the development of doctrines related to prophethood we may, as we have so often had to do, refer to Philo. Philo considered that prophethood was communion with God in the very highest degree. It was something which was only for the wise and virtuous man or, as the Muslim would say, for the one perfect in theoretical knowledge (*nazar*) and practical ('*amal*). The knowledge which the prophet possesses includes the knowledge of the future and of hidden things. This is precisely the same in the later Muslim formulations. The prophet falls into a state of ecstasy, enthusiasm, inspired frenzy, and natural reason is suspended. He is passive and possessed. As *wahī* is described by the Muslim theologians, we see all of these elements, and sometimes feel that "possession" would be a more appropriate word to translate the Arabic term than the more sober "revelation" or "inspiration". In Philo there is the idea of the ascent to the intelligible world, e.g., he speaks of the ascent of Abraham.<sup>1</sup> In one of his books<sup>2</sup> he draws a picture of the man who is able to perform the office of a prophet. He must be a man who is not characterized solely by the "blood-soul", i.e., the lower soul which operates in sense. He must have learned how to renounce sense, to transcend his corporeal limitations, to resign even his own speech and become a vehicle of pure intellect. This is really an abnegation of his own intellect by the prophet. His own mind must cease to be operative, but under the influence of the divine the ordinary process is reversed, and for knowledge through the senses, which is the normal way in which human knowledge is acquired, and the ordinary method by which the reason is stimulated to its proper act, there is substituted an immediate intuition by the higher intelligence through its stimulation from above. In the description he gives of the prophecy of Moses, Philo distinguishes three types of prophecy. In the first type there is given to Moses the very utterance of God Himself, e.g., the Decalogue. In the second kind there is the response of God to questions asked by the Prophet or others. Instances given are Lev. xxiv. 10 ff., Num. xv. 32-36, and xxvii. 1-11. In the third sort, the Prophet is possessed of God, and it is this which entitles him to be

<sup>1</sup> *Quaest. et Sol. in Gen.* iii. 9-10.

<sup>2</sup> *Quis Rerum Div. Heres*, 52-53 (i. 510-11).

called a Prophet in the fullest and truest sense. Muslim theory presents points of similarity here also. *Wahī zāhir*<sup>1</sup> is when there come to the Prophet the very words which God intends him to proclaim, and in this Muhammad remains passive. The *asbāb un muzūl*, or conditions and causes of the descent of revelation, are described at length in the Muslim books on the exegesis of the Qur'ān, and they include the record of the answers God gives when questioned. Thus, e.g., the Prophet is asked concerning the use of wine and the legitimacy of gambling (Sura ii. 216), about the right behaviour to orphans (Sura ii. 218), about question of ceremonial purity (ii. 222), about fighting in the sacred month (ii. 213), and about degrees of relationship (Sura iv. 175), etc. In addition there is what is known as *ishārat ul Malak*, in which the Muslim finds an explanation of Muhammad's saying that the Holy Spirit came into his heart. The meaning of this is that the idea was conveyed to the Prophet by Gabriel but not the exact spoken words. Finally, there is the inspiration known as *ilhām*, which is not inconsistent with the use of one's own powers under the guidance of God. It is to be borne in mind that early Christian writers maintained there was such a thing as ecstatic inspiration and that in the case of prophecy the recipient was quite passive. Irenaeus, Theophilus and Tertullian all held this and considered that the prophet was simply an instrument of the Spirit. On the other hand, they believed that the inspiration of the Christian writers was of a different order. Clement and Origen said that the writers of Scripture were fully possessed of their faculties. Their minds, far from being overruled, were rendered clearer and the way they wrote was their own. So while Irenaeus can speak of the prophets as like musical instruments, he quite rejects a similar passivity in the Christian writers of the New Testament.<sup>2</sup> Origen like Philo held the immediate and ecstatic inspiration of the prophets of the Old Testament.<sup>3</sup>

When we turn to the question of the person of the prophet, we find that there was a tendency even among the Jews, and this is particularly noticeable in Philo, to take great national figures like Abraham, Moses and Aaron as the criterion of judgment as to what constituted the degree or rank of prophethood, rather than to consider those who probably had more right to the name of Prophet in the strictest sense, e.g., Isaiah and Jeremiah. After the advent of Christ, we find that certain Jewish sects ascribed to Him the dignity of prophethood. The Ebionites, for instance, held that Christ was a Prophet and Teacher and that He worked miracles. They were loth to consider Him as suffering and dying, and also held to the hope of His coming again. One of the main ideas which they advanced was that Christ was a

<sup>1</sup> *ERÉ* art. by Sell, vii. 351.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Irenaeus, iii. 212.

<sup>3</sup> *Ad Autolycum*, ii. 9; *Adv. Marcion*, iv. 22.

true Prophet intended to restore the primitive religion of Moses. The correspondence between their thought and that of later Islam is obvious. It should not be considered wildly improbable that there is in Ebionite doctrine, a typical Semitic reaction possessed of sufficient vitality to express itself at a later date in Islam. Thus we find the conception of Christ as the last of a series of prophets in the Pseudo-Clementine literature. These prophets are Abraham, Moses, Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.<sup>1</sup> Epiphanius mentions the names Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron and Joshua<sup>2</sup> as the prophets in whom the Ebionites believed, and he says that the Sethians held that Mani, Adam, Seth, Noah and Abraham were prophets. We have already noted the influence of this on the Harrānian sects. The same writer tells us that Ebion believed that Christ was Adam into whom God breathed His breath, the Heavenly Man, the First Adam who used to appear to the patriarchs. This would seem to suggest that there was what one might call a prophet-cult opposed to the Hellenistic emanation theories and to Christianity. It is also a remarkable fact that the Pseudo-Clementines held the Old Testament to have been interpolated by false prophets, and they asserted that these had introduced stories into the sacred text which imputed sins to Adam and others.<sup>3</sup> By this it would appear that there was even then some sort of doctrine of the sinlessness of the prophets. It was also held by these sectaries that Christ was only a creature.<sup>4</sup>

The impeccability of the prophets cannot be said to have much support from the Qur'ān, but in the early exposition of the doctrine in Islam this particular tenet is set in the very forefront. That the discussion of such matters is of very early date is seen in the fact that Baghdādī instances heresies on the point among the followers of Ibn Karrām and Mu'ammar.<sup>5</sup> One of these early heresies was that the essential qualities of the prophet did not consist in the revelation which was made to him, nor in his miracles, nor yet in his sinlessness, but in his being sent by God, and in being immune from sins which would disqualify him as a truthful witness, but not from other sins. By the time of Al Ash'ari the dogma is fixed as orthodox that after assuming the office it is not possible for the prophet to commit any deadly or even minor sins. The Christian doctrine of the sinlessness of Christ was met by the assertion of the sinlessness of the prophets.

Mention has been made of the fact that miracle had come to be

<sup>1</sup> *Homilies*, ii. 6; iii. 11, 20, 49; *Clem. Recognitions*, i. 16, 40–41.

<sup>2</sup> See Epiphanius: *Haer.*, xix, xxx, and liii.

<sup>3</sup> Our information for the Ebionites is gathered from the Pseudo-Clementine writings, i.e., the *Homilies* and the *Recognitions*, and from the *Book of Elkesai*; the *Heresiologies* of Hippolytus (ix. 8–12 and x. 25), and Epiphanius (capp. cited above) should also be consulted.

<sup>4</sup> *Hom.*, xvi. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Baghdādī: *Farg.*, Pt. III, Cap. vii.

regarded as one of the marks of a prophet. It is difficult to place miracles in relation to prophethood without finding affinities with similar tendencies outside Islam to regard them as evidential. That the ideas grew up in Christendom to some extent is undeniable. We have already seen this in the description of the dialogue between Gregentius and Herban. There is a widespread belief in miracles in the period of which we are writing, but the material here is popular rather than soundly theological or philosophical. It is not difficult to trace the evolution of belief in miracles performed by Muhammad. In the later theology the whole superstructure of the doctrine of prophethood rests on the belief in miracles and the assumption that by these prophethood can be proved. It will be noted that miracle plays a lesser part in the recognition of prophethood in the philosophers. For an example of the very early treatment of miracle from the point of view of a philosophizing theologian we have to turn to Philo. There we have plain evidence that he sought to rationalize miracle.<sup>1</sup>

Augustine has a philosophy of miracle<sup>2</sup> and admits miracle as evidence.<sup>3</sup> The miracles of Apollonius of Tyana may have been fictitious, and may have been designed as some sort of a counter-attack on Christianity with its miracles of the New Testament, but even if they were fictitious, that they should have been recorded shows what great store even the Greeks set on the miraculous as evidence of religion. There was some scepticism expressed with regard to the possibility of miracles in early Islam. Thus Abū Hudhayl was very reluctant to accept the report (*khabar*) of miracle. He thought that people might agree in a lie, and he would only accept evidence for miracle from one of the "people of Paradise" (Sura viii. 66).<sup>4</sup> Some hints of the atomism which prepares the defence of miracle by denying continuity and the laws of nature are to be found in the earliest times. Thus Bakr b. Ukt̄h 'Abd ul Wahid b. Ziyād talked of a blow falling without pain or injury.<sup>5</sup> An Nazzām denied the miracles of the splitting of the moon, the pebbles praising Allah and the water produced from the Prophet's fingers.<sup>6</sup> Lane in his *Lexicon* sums up in few words the idea of miracle which took shape in Islam. This is in his definition of *mu'jiza*: "A miracle performed by a prophet (distinguished from *karāma* which signifies one performed by a saint, or righteous man, not claiming to be a prophet); *that by which a prophet disables the opponent in a contest*; as defined by the Muslim theologians, an event at variance with the usual course (of nature, i.e., '*āda*) produced by means of one

<sup>1</sup> See *Vita Mosis, passim.*

<sup>2</sup> *City of God*, xxii, Capp. ii ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xxii, Cap. viii.

<sup>4</sup> *Farg* of Baghdādi, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>5</sup> Baghdādi: *Farg*, IV, VI.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, III, III.

who lays claim to the office of the prophet in contending with those who disacknowledge his claim in such a manner as renders them unable to produce the like thereof; or an event breaking through the usual course (of nature) (*amr khāriq li'l 'ādati*) inviting to good and happiness, coupled with a claim to the prophetic office and intended to manifest the veracity of him who claims to be the Apostle of God." The word translated "nature" does not mean nature in our sense of the word at all. It is Leibnitz's *coutume de Dieu*, the habit or custom to which one returns again and again. It refers to acts and manner of speech (mannerisms). It is in no sense "a law of nature" because by that term we mean something which is immanent in the constitution of a thing. The chief evidential miracle of Muhammad is alleged to be the Qur'ān. The method of argument is peculiar. Miracle is recognized as miracle because it is worked by someone who is claiming to be a prophet, otherwise it might be simply a wonderful act by someone not a prophet. At the same time miracle is an evidence that the one performing it is a prophet, the inference, or rather the prior assumption being that no one can at one and the same time claim to be a prophet and work a miracle unless he is a prophet. If he does not claim to be a prophet he may by magic or some other means perform a work in every respect like a miracle. If he is not a prophet and claims to be one he will be prevented from performing any wonderful act to substantiate his false claim. The argument proceeds on very precarious assumptions.

### (III) SCRIPTURE

As we have already seen, the Qur'ān is declared to be the eternal and uncreated (*abādī wa ghayr makhlūq*) word of God. By the dogmatic statement, that which came as an Arabic Qur'ān is identified with the Heavenly Prototype written before all time by the Pen on the Preserved Tablet. "The conception of the eternity and uncreatedness of the word of God . . . was applied by the Muslims to the copy in the heaven and then finally by the strictly orthodox school to the Arabic copies of the Qur'ān and expressed epigrammatically in the sentence, 'What lies between the two covers is the word of God'. The Mu'tazilites and the more free-thinking theologians raised a protest, it is true, but after al Ash'ari himself, in the last version of his dogmatics, had championed the view that the written or recited Qur'ān is identical in being and reality with the uncreated word of God, the victory was won by the orthodox school."<sup>1</sup> From this heavenly prototype various portions are at divers times revealed to different prophets. It is quite clear that the heavenly book is more than the Qur'ān. "When we read (Sura xii. 1) 'These are the miraculous tokens of the perspicuous scripture and we have sent it down as

<sup>1</sup> *Encycl. of Islam* art. *Koran* by Buhl, II, p. 1076.

the Arabic Qur'ān' (cf. xx. 12) or 'We have made the perspicuous scripture into an Arabic Qur'ān' (xlivi. 1 f.), or when the Qur'ān is called (x. 38) an exposition of the scripture of the Lord of heaven, it is evident that *al Kitāb* is the more comprehensive term, and that it is 'Qur'ān' in so far as its contents are revealed in a way intelligible to man. It was not the heavenly book itself that was sent down to Muhammad, but portions of its content in an Arabic form, and for this the word Qur'ān is used.<sup>1</sup> It is for this reason that Jews and Christians can be called "People of the Book" (cf. xxvi. 195 f.), and for the same reason the Qur'ān is said to confirm what has gone before (Sura iii. 75; vi. 92; xxxv. 28; xlvi. 11). There is a suggestion in Sura vi. 7 that the Book is not a material book, "Had we sent down to thee a book on paper, and they had touched it with their hands, still those who misbelieve would have said, 'This is naught but obvious magic.'"

The traditional account is that just before the prophet Muhammad was called, the heavenly book was brought down to the lowest heaven and stored in the *Bait ul 'izza*. From thence the angel Gabriel dictated it to Muhammad delivering it piecemeal as need arose. Once a year the angel would go over what the scribes of the Prophet had written in order to check it with the heavenly original, and in the last year of Muhammad's life this was done twice. Thus, in a way, revelation was a kind of "mental perusal" to use Margoliouth's terms.

It might be argued that with such a view of scripture the implication is that all scripture is equal. Jews received part of it (Suras iii. 22 and iv. 47) and Christians part. It has been said that there are some 131 passages of the Qur'ān which refer to the Bible and many of them speak in the highest praise of it. The *Tawrāt*, the *Zabūr* and the *Injīl*, i.e., the Law, the Psalms and the Gospel are all mentioned. It is also said that these former scriptures were given by God, the Law to Moses (Sura xxxii. 23), the Psalms to David (Sura xvii. 57), the Gospel to Jesus (Sura v. 50). The terms of reverence are "Book of God" (Sura v. 48), "Covenant" (Sura ii. 70), "Light and Guidance for men" (Sura vi. 91), "a perfect rule" (vi. 155). In Sura v. 72 these remarkable words occur, "O people of the Book! ye rest on naught until ye stand fast by the Law and the Gospel, and what has been revealed to you from your Lord." Belief in these is enjoined, "Say ye, 'We believe in God and what has been revealed to us, and what has been revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the Tribes, and what was brought to Moses and Jesus, and what was brought unto the Prophets from their Lord; we will not distinguish between any one of them and unto Him are we resigned.'" In Sura xl. 72 punishment is threatened for those who reject the former scriptures as false. The Qur'ān is the attestation of the previous scriptures,

<sup>1</sup> *Encycl. of Islam art. Koran* by Buhl, II, p. 1063.

Suras xii. 111, xxxv. 28, vi. 93. Baidāwī in his comment on Sura xxix. 26 says explicitly that the reference to "the Book" means all the books generally or "four books" which Jalāl ud Dīn specifically names saying, "the *Tawrāt*, *Injīl*, *Zabūr*, and *Qur'ān*". The implication in Sura ii. 85 is that Muhammad's hearers who reject the *Qur'ān* which he brings, are accepting revelation only in part, and there is no quarrel with them that they believe in the former scriptures, but that they believe only in them to the exclusion of the *Qur'ān*.

The passages quoted seem to be capable of only one interpretation and that is, that revelation is conceived as a gradual impartation to men of portions of the heavenly book and that the process is considered to have been carried on by the Prophet Muhammad. There is one transcendent word with various revelations of it to mankind. If it were said that the Law, the Psalms and the Gospel were incomplete, it might easily be said that the *Qur'ān* was also incomplete, and the only pre-eminence of one above another would be succession in time, a rather doubtful guarantee of pre-eminence since, e.g., Nahum succeeds Isaiah in time. And there are evidences that the *Qur'ān* was incomplete. For instance, Sura iv. 162 "Of apostles we have already told thee of some before; and of apostles some we have not told thee of." And also to the same effect in Sura xl. 78. Of external evidences of the same we might instance the necessity for the Sunna, and the hypothesis of an unwritten law which was handed down orally, as the Shi'ites and some Sufis aver. That the Law was incomplete is shown by the fact that the rules for the *Hajj* are not fully explained in the *Qur'ān*, and that there are only three periods of ritual prayer mentioned therein. Thus there seems to be implicit in the evidence we have quoted an idea that the various parts of revelation are complementary, and in this connexion one might ask, "What is the advantage of a dogmatic declaration of belief in 'the Books, all of them' if they are not to be set in this relation to one another?"

The Muslim doctrine is that the heavenly prototype is preserved in the *Qur'ān*. Is it possible to maintain that there is a full and accurate preservation of the heavenly book in the *Qur'ān*? It should be remembered that the Muslim account of the necessity for an angelic revision every year, which is designed to give the impression of great exactitude, really would have no meaning if there had not been liability to error somewhere. There is also a great deal of doubt as to the writing of the *Qur'ān* during the lifetime of the Prophet. What, for instance, of the Meccans' demand for a book that they could read, in Sura xvii. 95? <sup>1</sup> Does not this indicate or at least suggest that at this time the *Qur'ān* was not written but simply recited? Even if the writing is considered to be established, if the Prophet were illiterate, he had no means of

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, see Sura xlvi. 11. "But before it was the Book of Moses, a model and a mercy; and this is a book confirming it in Arabic language."

testing the accuracy of the scribes except by a miraculous feat of memory when they read over their work to him. If the Qur'ān was not written, then the memorisers would have to be infallible. Goldziher has said, "There exists no canonical book, recognized by any religious community as a revealed or inspired original, whose text in the earliest period of its transmission, shows to such a degree a picture of fluctuation and uncertainty as we find in the text of the Qur'ān."<sup>1</sup> Other Western scholars dissent from this view and think that the Qur'ān represents substantially the actual words uttered by the mouth of the Prophet. We might well ask the question as to whether it is clearly established that an inerrant text was thought of at first? Margoliouth says that it was only when an official text had been devised that the theory of verbal inspiration of the Qur'ān came to be adopted. We might see the beginnings of such an idea in the tradition which relates that Huḍaifa b. ʻul Yamān, during the raids into Armenia and Azerbaijan, was shocked at hearing Arabs reciting the Qur'ān with such dialectical peculiarities that what one recited could not be understood by the others, so that some even went to the length of denying that what was recited was the Qur'ān at all. He therefore went to Uthmān and said, "Overtake this people before they differ over the Scripture as the Jews and the Christians differ." It should also be noticed that the perspicuous book was *made into* an Arabic Qur'ān (Sura xlvi. 2 f.), and in this case verbal reproduction could not have been a *sine qua non*. In the case of the Qur'ān quoting itself, as for instance in Sura iv. 139 compared with Sura vi. 67, exact verbal repetition does not seem to be the aim, and there seems to be some hint of this also in the instance when the prophet speaks of forgetfulness. This might well mean that he had not repeated something in exactly the same words, and that the revelation which came to him implied that the exact words were not important: though we are well aware that this is not the usual interpretation put upon the words in Sura ii. 100.

Apart from what the Prophet himself might have done, it is clear that almost desperate efforts had to be made to achieve uniformity when once it had been laid down that verbal accuracy was desirable. There is the story of the burning of all but those copies which contained the official text in 'Uthmān's recension. And there is also a good deal of evidence that this was resented and in some cases resisted. It was said of 'Uthmān that he had "torn up the Book"<sup>2</sup> and "The Qur'ān was in many books and thou discreditest all but one".<sup>3</sup> Even the action of 'Uthmān does not seem to have been sufficient as time went on, for another purge in which faulty copies were destroyed took place

<sup>1</sup> *Richtungen*, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Tabari, ii. 1, 516.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 6, 2952.

in A.H. 322.<sup>1</sup> Resistance to the action of 'Uthmān is reported by Ibn Hanbal, who records that when Ibn Mas'ūd was commanded to alter his copy of the Qur'ān to make it square with the official version, he refused, declaring that he had heard seventy Suras from the mouth of the Prophet.<sup>2</sup> We find traditional reports of three different recensions at least, one in the time of the Prophet, another in the time of 'Uthmān and a third in the reign of the Caliph 'Abd ul Malik carried out by his Wazir Al Hajjāj b. Yūsuf towards the end of the seventh century A.D. (c., A.H. 70).

Under this distinguished statesman there was a standardization of the diacritical points used in distinguishing the letters of the Arabic script, and the present system of vowels was fixed with some degree of regularity in the middle of the eighth century A.D.

Beside these official attempts to guard the text of the Qur'ān—and considerations of space prevent a completer survey—we find that there were many more collections. We read of 'Ali's collection<sup>3</sup> loaded on a camel, a hint at the cumbrous material, palm leaves, stones, bones and other things, on which it was written. We have the story of Hafsa's codex and a suggestion that there was no particular veneration for the actual written copy in the very early days, and even in the Prophet's circle, for this codex was neglected and left under a bed where it was partly eaten.<sup>4</sup> In the *Tabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd we read of some ten collectors. The *Fihrist*<sup>5</sup> gives seven names. Among those we are know 'Umar, Abū Bakr, 'Ali, 'Uthmān, Mu'ādh b. Jabal, Ubayy b. Ka'b, 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd, Abū Zayd, Sālim b. Ma'qal, Sa'd b. 'Ubayd, Abū Dardā, though some of these are said by later writers to have been merely memorizers. The traditional material<sup>6</sup> given to us with regard to the collection of the Qur'ān presents so many difficulties, that it is almost impossible to disentangle the elements in order to obtain a consistent historical account. Thus we find that the collection was made in the time of Muḥammad, which hardly fits in with the anxiety of 'Umar lest the slaughter of the memorizers at Yamāma should result in the Qur'ān being lost, which was unlikely to be the case if there was already a standard collection prepared with the sacred sanction of the Prophet. It is also not consistent with the account of the reluctance of Zaid b. Thābit to undertake something "for which he had no command from the prophet" and his complaint about the difficulty of the task laid upon him. Indeed the part played by Zaid is most difficult to understand. He is first the amanuensis of the Prophet, is called to undertake the collection by Abū Bakr at the

<sup>1</sup> Miskawaih : *Universal History* (ed. Amedroz in Gibb Memorial Series), i. 285.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Hanbal : *Musnad*, i. 414.

<sup>3</sup> Ya'qūbī, i. 152.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Hanbal : *Musnad*, vi. 269.

<sup>5</sup> P. 27.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. the traditions quoted at length in Hughes : *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 486.

instance of 'Umar and protests, and is finally called again to the task by 'Uthmān and makes similar protests.

Though Ibn Hajar dates the first recension as A.H. 25, i.e., 'Uthmān's, we have evidence that there were already in existence various codices of Miqdād b. al Aswad, of Ibn Mas'ud, of Abū Mūsā ul Ash'arī, and of Ubayy b. Ka'b<sup>1</sup> to name only a few. That there were such codices is further proved by the necessity for the destruction ordered by 'Uthmān. It is not our task to disentangle these accounts and others which still further complicate the matter, but simply to point out that an inerrant text and verbal inspiration can hardly be inferred from what we have learned of the circumstances of the writing or collection of the Qur'ān, while the steps which were taken seem to indicate that a theory of verbal accuracy, with a conviction that literal inspiration was essential, seems to have been the motive in 'Uthmān, Hajjāj and later Ibn Mujāhid. In passing it might be pointed out that a similar idea did not exist in the early days of Christianity or, in all probability, all but one of the Gospels would have been consigned to oblivion or a harmony constructed and substituted.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, there were certain misgivings voiced in Islām as to whether the precise text had been correctly preserved<sup>3</sup> by the successive efforts of the collectors. Most writers mention "verses remembered which are not within the two covers". In the tradition "from Ismā'il b. Ibrāhim, from Ayyūb, from Nāfi", from Ibn 'Umar: He said: Let none of you say 'I have learned the whole of the Qur'ān', for how does he know what the whole of it is, when much of it has disappeared? Let him rather say, 'I have learned what is now extant of it.' Sura xxxiii. is said to have been longer than it is now, and to have included the "verse of stoning". In the traditions it is often affirmed that Gabriel appeared to the Prophet and delivered to him messages which, though we find them recorded in the pages of *Hadīth*, are not contained in the Qur'ān.<sup>4</sup> How could this happen? Moreover, what is the authority for the abrogated and abrogating verses of the Qur'ān? If this is something outside the Qur'ān either in *Hadīth* or *Qiyās*, can it be sustained that the Qur'ān in itself is inerrant? Finally, the authorization of the "seven readings", namely, Nāfi' of Madina, Ibn Kathir of Mecca, Ibn 'Āmir of Damascus, Abū 'Amr of Baṣra, and 'Āsim, Hamza, and Al Kisā'i of Kufa, by Ibn Mujāhid in A.D. 934, though the difference in them may not be very great, has a vital bearing on the question of whether the text of the Qur'ān is exactly as it came from the mouth of the Prophet.

Another point to be borne in mind is the loose order of the Qur'ān.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn ul Athīr, iii. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., however, in this connexion, the widely prevalent use of the *Diatessaron* of Tatian instead of the Gospels in the Syrian Church.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Tabari's *Chronicle*, i. 1816 and 1819.

<sup>4</sup> Zubāt ul Bukhārī, 188-89, and cf. Bukhārī: *Sahīh, Imān*, 37, and *Ba'd ul khalq*, 7.

Thus a Muslim writer can say two things which *seem* to be contradictory. "In respect to both verses and suras, the Qur'ān is not in the order in which it was sent down,"<sup>1</sup> and "The prophet himself indicated the appropriate places in the suras for the verses." This is, however, only an apparent contradiction, and the matter is further explained in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal.<sup>2</sup> "Ibn 'Abbās said, 'I said to 'Uthmān, 'What made you take the Sura Anfāl (viii.) which is one of the *Mathāmī* and the Sura Barā'a (ix.) which is one of the 'Hundreds', and write them down without writing the *Bismillah* in between them and put them along with the 'Seven' (long suras) ?'" He answered, "As time went on many suras were revealed to the Prophet. When anything was revealed to him, he used to call for a scribe and order him to place it in the sura which mentioned such matters. When a group of verses was revealed he used to say, 'Put these verses in the sura in which such matters are mentioned', and similarly when a single verse came down. Now Sura Anfāl was one of the first suras of Madina, while Sura Barā'a was one of the last suras of the Qur'ān. But since this was like that in subject-matter, we supposed that it must belong to it, and the Messenger of Allah died without clearly declaring it to belong to it. This is the reason for what we did.'"<sup>3</sup> The only passage in the Qur'ān itself which gives some suggestion that Muhammad may have arranged the text of it is Sura viii. 67, but one feels that if the arrangement had been made during the life-time of the Prophet it would have been different from what we now have. For one thing, there is no chronological order at present. There is a division made into Meccan and Medinote Suras but various lists are given. *Tārīkh ut Tashrī' ul Islāmī* gives the following as Suras of Medina: ii., iii., iv., v., viii., ix., xxii., xxiv., xxxiii., xlviij. to xliij. inclusive, lvii. to lxvi. inclusive and cx. The list in the *Fihrist*<sup>4</sup> differs from that in the *Itqān* of As Suyūtī, and differing arrangements were suggested by Ibn Mas'ūd and Ubayy b. Ka'b.<sup>5</sup> We have the curious anomaly, if the list given by Muḥammad ul Khudrī above is accepted, of Meccan verses abrogating Medinote passages (using Abu'l Qāsim's, *Al Nāsi'kha wa'l Mansūkh* as the authority for abrogating and abrogated verses). Thus Sura ii. 173 is cancelled by Sura xvii. 35; ii. 216a by xvi. 69; iii. 139 by xvii. 19; iv. 28 by xxiii. 65 and iv. 95 by xxv. 70 and 68. Some writers suggest that there are Meccan verses in Medinote suras and *vice versa*. It certainly seems a strange thing if verses given later were abrogated by verses given earlier.

<sup>1</sup> *Tārīkh ut Tashrī' ul Islāmī* by Muḥammad ul Khudrī, Urdu trans., p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Musnad*, i. 69.

<sup>4</sup> Nadīm includes xcix., lxxvi., and xii. as Meccan suras as we find also in *Tārīkh ut Tashrī' ul Islāmī*.

<sup>5</sup> See also Rodwell's translation in chronological order.

Taking all these matters into consideration, is it too much to suggest that the text of the Qur'ān depends on an oral tradition? What was written when the script was defective was an elaborate aid to memory; the diacritical points were added to ensure more accuracy, but difference in vowelling would have made all the difference to the sense, and so, as a further aid, the vowels were standardized in the writing. The accuracy of the memorizers should not, of course, be underestimated, but nevertheless that the Qur'ān owes its preservation to the human memorizers of an oral tradition seems to us to be incontrovertible. If the Prophet were illiterate a great deal would depend on his memory; and what was gathered of the Qur'ān "from the breasts of men" demanded further phenomenal memory in the Prophet's hearers; a defective script added more to the burden on the later memorizers. It should be noted also that any theory of the writing and revision of the Qur'ān during the life of the Prophet is destructive of the usual Muslim belief in the spontaneous, literal and inerrant transcription of a heavenly book. It would almost seem as if one would have to postulate in addition to the miraculous deliverance of the Qur'ān to the Prophet, a continual miracle performed by numerous followers, which reminds us that it was claimed for the translators of the Septuagint that working independently they produced each exactly the same translation. If Professor Bell's theory of the writing and rewriting of the Qur'ān under the Prophet's guidance is preferred to the oral transmission theory, literalism is equally impossible since an inerrant dictation leaves no room for any sort of literary revision.

We must now pass on to the theory of abrogation which is based by the orthodox on Sura ii. 100. This is a vexed question and one which leads to all sorts of complications. We have already indicated one. The doctrine of abrogation (*naskh*) really applies to the Qur'ān internally, and nothing more is implied by the text quoted above. We shall try to represent in as small a compass as possible the orthodox statement with regard to this doctrine, basing this on the book on the subject by Abu'l Qāsim already referred to.<sup>1</sup>

Abrogation is of three kinds: (a) Words and commands both abrogated, e.g., Anas b. Mālik said, "We used to read in Sura Tawba in the time of Muhammad, on whom be peace, 'Even if a man had two valleys full of gold, he would desire a fourth and nothing but the earth can fill a man's stomach. And God forgives him who repents'." Also 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd said, "Muhammad taught me a verse and I got it by heart and wrote it in my book. When I returned to my place I could remember nothing of it. Next morning when I opened my book, I found the page on which it was written white. I reported the matter to Muhammad. He said to me 'O Ibn Mas'ūd, that verse was taken up yesterday'." (b) The words are abrogated but not the

<sup>1</sup> *Al Nāsikh wa'l Mansūkh*.

commands, e.g., 'Umar said, "Had I not been afraid lest people should say I had added to the Qur'ān I would have recorded it" (i.e., the verse of stoning).<sup>1</sup> (c) Commands are abrogated, but the words remain (in the text of the Qur'ān). Examples of this kind of abrogation are found in sixty-three suras. The details are given herewith. The suras are classified as follows : (i) Those which contain both abrogating and abrogated verses, (ii) those which only contain abrogated verses, (iii) those which contain only abrogating verses, and (iv) those which contain neither abrogating nor abrogated verses. There is no need to detail these. A complete list will be found in an appendix.

Now the question arises as to how such a theory as this of abrogation can be brought into intelligible and rational relation with what has been said about the heavenly prototype of the Qur'ān, and its accurate production in the world by means of the Prophet. If there are texts which abrogate others in the written Qur'ān are we to conclude that this abrogation took place in the transcendent realm, and that in the heavenly original the abrogating and the abrogated will be found? But if this is not so, and the abrogating and abrogated appear only in the earthly copy then what becomes of the theory of the proper copying of the heavenly original. On the other hand, if the abrogated appears in the heavenly original, then what are we to conclude about the Divine Wisdom? Furthermore, if, as some later writers are fond of doing, we consider that abrogation is not to be interpreted in the manner of Abu'l Qāsim but really refers to the abrogation of the other scriptures by the Qur'ān, then are we to assume that in this case too, the abrogated and the abrogating are together in the heavenly tablet? If so, what sort of notion are we to gather as to the relation of this heavenly tablet to the will of God? It would simply seem to be a record of the temporal changes and chances of human life as seen by divine prescience, and would attribute to the divine all the shades and fluctuations of human life with no certainty as to what is truth and ultimately no concern for it, for that which is truth for yesterday and not for to-day is not truth at all. It would have to assume that a lengthy statement of history, e.g., that Jesus died on the cross, could stand in a book written by God alongside a denial that it took place. Such ideas are the height of absurdity and make a mockery of God. And if the Muslim should say that the Christian has a similar doctrine of abrogation of the Old Testament by the New, the facts are all against it. Not only is there the fact that Christians have accepted the Old Testament as Scripture and that the Bible as a whole is the vehicle of revelation, but the words of Christ are explicit, "Think not that I came to destroy the Law and the Prophets, I came not to destroy but to fulfil." And if the applicability of the Mosaic Law is in question, the Christian does not believe that changes and internalization of the

As Suyūtī: *Al Itqān*, ii. 29.

Law have to be effected by the abrogation of divine revelation by God. This is because the Christian's idea of divine revelation is not exactly equivalent to the idea of promulgation of divine Law, and to this conclusion he has been led not only by the teaching of Christ or Paul, but by the teaching of the great prophets of the Old Dispensation. The Law of Moses was not considered to need abrogation when prophets rebuked the externalism of the people of their day, and when Jeremiah spoke of the law written in men's hearts. The Law of Moses has its place in the revelation of God as preparation; the later teaching would have been to a great extent unintelligible without it.

The Muslim theoretically considers that the Qur'ān is a confirmation of the former scriptures, but is not prepared, as the Christian was with the Jewish scripture, to let the Qur'ān stand alongside the writings in the hands of Jews and Christians, because then it would have been seen that the supposed confirmation could not be sustained. Hence the further hypothesis that what the Qur'ān confirmed was not the writings at present in the hands of Jews and Christians because these latter have been corrupted. If the *Torah*, *Zabūr* and *Injil* are all the partial revelations of the transcendent book, then when they vary from the Qur'ān, the reason must be that the present writings do not represent what was actually sent down. "O congregation of Muslims, how can you ask questions of the people of the book, when your book which God revealed to His prophet brings the best tidings about God? Ye read it unfalsified and God has told you that the people of the book have altered what God wrote, and have falsified the book with their hands, and said, 'This is from God' in order to get some paltry reward for it. Has He not forbidden you to ask those people about what you have received in the way of knowledge? By God, we have never seen any one of them asking you about what has been revealed to *you*."<sup>1</sup> This is the idea which has taken root in Islam. But this is not really stated in the Qur'ān. As a matter of fact, even after taking all the similarities between the Bible and the Qur'ān into account, the Qur'ān manifests a clearly inadequate and incomplete knowledge of the contents of the Bible. The charge in the Qur'ān is of concealment rather than corruption. Misquotation and misrepresentation, however reprehensible, are not the same as corruption of the text of Scripture. Sura iii. 72 only refers to an equivocal manner of speech and not to alteration of the text. Sura ii. 154 is a reference to concealment and is so recognized by Ibn Ishāq in his *Sīra* when he records that Mu'ādh and some other Muslims asked the Jewish rabbis about a certain point in the *Tawrāt* and they concealed it. Similarly in Sura ii. 134 there is a charge of hiding the truth and also in iv. 48 ff. In Sura iii. 88 the Jews are invited to bring the Law for reference; this would hardly be the case if the Law had been corrupted. The *tahrif* spoken

<sup>1</sup> *Bukhārī: Sahīb, Kitab ush Shahāda No. 29.*

of in Sura v. 16 ff. and 54 is twisting the words or perverting them, but does not necessarily imply the changing of the written text. Furthermore the words are most likely concerned with an unacceptable interpretation made by unfriendly Jews of certain passages which others had reported to the Prophet as favouring his mission or prophetic of it. It must be said emphatically that in none of the texts of the Qur'ān do we find that the charge of the corruption of the text of the former Scriptures can be justified. Indeed, there are two pieces of evidence from the Qur'ān and the *Hadith* which declare that it is impossible for such a thing to take place. Sura xviii. 26 "Recite thou what thou art inspired of with the Book of thy Lord ; there is no changing His words" and the tradition in *Bukhāri* reported from Ibn 'Abbās, "There is no man who could corrupt a single word of what proceeded from God." Postulating therefore that the Law and the *Injīl* proceeded from God or that they are "His words", this would signify that God would not allow them to be altered. The God who gives the Scripture is surely able to preserve it, if everything depends on its incorrupt preservation or its inerrant text. The following opinion of Ibn Qayyim al Jawziya is interesting, "It is an entirely false idea when it is asserted that Jews and Christians have conspired together to expunge this name (i.e., the name of Muhammad) from their Scriptures in all the ends of the earth wherever they live. None of the learned Muslims asserts this, and God said nothing about this in the Qur'ān, nor did any of the Companions or Imāms or the Quranic scholars after them express themselves thus. It is, of course, possible that the common people think they can help Islam by such an interpretation, but herein is the proverb true which says, 'The clever opponent can wish for nothing better than that an ignorant friend should help the enemy.' They misunderstand, in fact, the sense of the word in the Qur'ān, vii. 156, and they think that the name which occurs in the *Tawrāt* and *Injīl* is the actual Arabic name, which, in fact, never occurs once in those books. What is mentioned is a description of his characteristics and the time of his advent."<sup>1</sup>

In spite, however, of these facts the charge was made at a very early date that the Christian Scriptures were corrupted. This we have seen in the account of the *Apology of Timothy*, the *Apology of Al Kindī*, and the counter-polemic of 'Ali Tabarī. The charge was unfortunately one which was occasionally made elsewhere. We have had occasion to refer to this in the account given of the Paulicians. But when such charges were levelled, they seldom meant that the actual text of the Scripture was altered. The impossibility of this taking place over the whole range of the Church throughout all the sects and among heretics who possessed copies seems to be fairly

<sup>1</sup> Goldziher : in Z.D.M.G., xxxii, 1878 *Über muhammedanische Polemik gegen Ahl al Kitāb.*

obvious. The charges were, most frequently, as in the case of the Paulicians, directed to the Canon and not to the text (following the Marcionites), and in other cases to redrafting of creedal statements. "Zahn quotes a passage from Eusebius in which heretics are said to have accused the Roman Church of recoining the truth like forgers, and makes the acute suggestion that the reference was to some change in the Baptismal creed."<sup>1</sup> Whether there was such a corruption as Muslims allege, induced by a desire to exclude all reference to the future coming of Muhammad, can be safely left to scientific investigation and palaeography, when the charge will be found to be entirely frivolous and unworthy of intelligent opponents of Christianity.

The Qur'an was even in the days of the Prophet and later more elaborately claimed to be an outstanding miracle. Produced by one who was alleged to be illiterate, it was a model of Arabic style, so unique that no one could produce anything like it, and marked by the foretelling of future events. There is a certain naïvety in the claims that the Prophet recorded matters which he could know in no other way but by inspiration. For instance, the statement in Sura iii. 39 that he was not present when lots were drawn for the guardianship of the Virgin Mary, and other statements of a similar nature, as if no one could record an event if it had not happened in his presence. Faced with two possible hypotheses, a miracle or dependence on the report of someone else, which should one choose? Why should God work a miracle when quite ordinary human processes could produce the same result?

With regard to the Qur'an as a miracle of style, the challenge to produce anything comparable occurs again and again in the Qur'an (Suras xi. 16, x. 39, ii. 21, lii. 34). It is declared that the joint efforts of men and jinn would fail to accomplish such a feat (Sura xvii. 90). There are very early denials of this recorded in the heresiologies. According to Baghdādi it was denied by An Nazzām. In his account of the fifteenth heresy of Nazzām, we find the statement that the composition and literary elegance of the Qur'an is not to be considered a proof of its miraculous character and a proof of the prophethood of Muhammad. Nazzām plainly put the proof of the Qur'an on the occult, or the prophecies of the future contained in it, i.e., "hidden things which it manifests". Baghdādi said that Nazzām plainly contradicted Sura xvii. 90 and said that creatures were capable of achieving an eloquence and style comparable with the Qur'an.<sup>2</sup> Nazzām was apparently not alone in this opinion for the Murdārites who were followers of 'Isā b. Ṣabīḥ, alias Abū Mūsā al Murdār who was dubbed "the monk of the Mu'tazila" taught that men could produce something comparable with the Qur'an. There is also evidence that the challenge

<sup>1</sup> Burn in *ERE*, IV, 238a.

<sup>2</sup> Baghdādi : *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

was taken up by Musailima<sup>1</sup> and even Sura vi. 93 might mean that the challenge was accepted. Was the *Fusūl wa Ghāyāt* of Abu'l 'Alā a reply?<sup>2</sup> Baidāwī clearly says that the challenge was accepted by Nādir b. Hāritha.<sup>3</sup>

The incomparability of the Qur'ān must be subject to inquiry from two different points of view. It is not simply a question as to whether something comparable to the Qur'ān can be produced in the future, but whether the Qur'ān reproduces anything which was in existence before? With regard to the last point we have already seen that the Qur'ān in its subject-matter and to some extent in the foreign vocabulary<sup>4</sup> which it contains depends on what was in existence before. With regard to the former point it might be impossible to produce anything in Arabic quite like the Qur'ān and for the Qur'ān to occupy a unique position in Arabic literature and for it still to be less than a miracle. The Qur'ān *does* occupy a unique position in the Arabic literature. It is probably the first prose book in Arabic. In it we see a transition from the old bardic poetry to something of which the Arab had previously no knowledge. In this Muhammad shows his genius. But by this very fact the Qur'ān became the standard by which anything afterwards could be judged. Grammarians formed their rules very largely by reference to it. Its style was also regarded as the criterion of all good style and so future ages had no other standard of comparison. If the comparison is to be made with literature in other languages then the difficulties are very great indeed. Some might consider the rhymed prose tedious and forced, especially when words have artificial endings in order to make them rhyme as, e.g., *Sīnīn* for *Sīnā'* (Mount Sinai) in Sura xcv. 2 and *Ilyāsīn* in Sura xxxvii. 130 for *Ilyās*. Nöldeke in his discussion of the subject makes reference to the frequent anacolutha. It is also possible for a non-Arab to show the discrepancy between general rules of grammar and some of the constructions in the Qur'ān, e.g., the *fayakūnu* of Sura iii. 51 where the perfect is required or possibly the subjunctive,<sup>5</sup> and why *Sābi'īna* in Sura ii. 59 and *Sābi'ūna* in Sura v. 73 since '*inna* requires the accusative? Similarly in Sura vii. 160, we have an exception to the rule that numbers from eleven to ninety-nine take the noun they qualify in the singular number. It is not that these points are very serious, but the one who postulates perfection for the Qur'ān lays himself open to criticism. The fact is that what would be characterized as errors in other books are in the Qur'ān classed as exceptions, because of the unique position that the Qur'ān holds in the language.

The prophecies in the Qur'ān which are most frequently pointed out

<sup>1</sup> Palgrave : *Journey through Arabia*, i. 382.

<sup>2</sup> Vide Yāqūt : *Dictionary of Learned Men*, VI, 235.

<sup>3</sup> On Sura xxxi. 5 in his *Commentary*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Mutawakkilī* of As-Suyūtī and *Itqān*, *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> See Wright : *Arabic Grammar*, ii. 30 f.

as having been fulfilled, and therefore as proving the divine character of the book, are the defeat of the Jews foretold in Sura iii. 107 ff., and the Byzantine victory over Persia in Sura xxx. 1-4.

When we examine the Qur'ān carefully, some doubts are born as to whether the Prophet Muḥammad really held that at all times he was inspired with exact words. The terms which are used are not always clear and sometimes suggest something quite different from literalism : "Allah sends the angel down with the spirit out of his *amr* to whom He will" (Sura xvi. 2). "We have revealed to thee a spirit out of our *amr*" (Sura xlvi. 52). "The Lord of the Throne sends the spirit out of his *Amr* to whom he will of his servants so that he may admonish" (Sura xl. 15). The words are *min amrihi*, *rūhan min amrinā*, and *ar ruha min amrihi* respectively. This should be compared with the question which the Prophet refers to in Sura xvii. 87, "They shall ask thee about the spirit. Say, The spirit is from the *Amr* of my Lord (*min amri Rabbī*) and ye are given but little knowledge of it." This might easily point to the identification of *amr* with *memra* in the sense of *logos* and all the passages could mean "the Spirit from the Logos". The phrase about the "little knowledge given" points to the mysterious character of the whole. The later commentators have insisted that the spirit here means Gabriel, which certainly presumes more than the "little knowledge" given. Is it not possible that Muḥammad was aware of the inadequacy of terms of dictation applied to the experience he had? Did he desire in these passages to indicate that something less concrete and definable occurred? He certainly adopted an ambiguous manner of speech in the passages quoted, so ambiguous indeed that his hearers, unless they had some acquaintance with the *memra* conception or the "word of the Lord" coming upon a prophet, would have found it most difficult to understand. There is also a confession of ambiguity in Sura iii. 5. "He it is who has revealed to thee the book, of which there are some verses which are decisive and they are the 'mother of the book'; and others ambiguous . . . none know the interpretation of it except God." These passages seem to suggest at least that Muḥammad did not conceive of his inspiration altogether in crassly concrete terms. That certain difficulties were felt with regard to the relations of the uttered word and the transcendent word we have already shown. There is a hint of this also in what Baghdādī says of the fifth heresy of Abū Hudhayl. He apparently affirmed that no two men on earth had heard the same sound, and all that could be said was that they heard the same species of sound, just as two men could not eat the same food. Sound is heard only as it enters into or flows through the "spirit" by the organ of hearing. Baghdādī then goes on to say that the heretical point about this is that it would follow that no one had heard the same word from Allah and His prophet. For a parallel to

this we would point to a similar differentiation of "the word" from "part of the word as received by man" made by Philo in one of his works.<sup>1</sup> If the word "*min*" in the passages quoted above is taken in the partitive sense the suggestion is still stronger.

It is quite clear that ideas differed as to what was to be expected in Scripture, and this ranged from literalism to less mechanical ideas, both in respect to the inspiration and the exegesis of the word. We have already seen that the very early Christian writers, while admitting ecstatic inspiration for prophets, held that the writers of the New Testament used their faculties under divine guidance. The delay in settling the canon has been pointed out as due in some degree to the persistent belief that revelation in the age of the spirit was not closed. The Christians, unlike to some extent the Jews before them and the Muslims after them, did not consider revelation to be a closed book. The Jews, while they felt that revelation was closed, had to open it again to Rabbinical interpretation, and the Muslims who accepted the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad, had to open the door again to *Ijtihād*. Life is not static and a revelation which is static forfeits the life which makes it relevant to a living world. In the Quranic conception revelation was moving not closed, otherwise there could not have been the idea of the long line of prophets, but now movement was thought to have ceased and to have come to an abrupt conclusion with the Seal of the Prophets. This latter idea did a great deal to minimize the value to them of the conception of the long line of prophets in history. In the Christian writers the idea of the historical unfoldment of revelation is not a modern idea. It is to be found in the New Testament. It is also implied in the binding up of the Old Testament with the New. Revelation was considered to be progressive up to Christ and from Christ in the dispensation of His Spirit. The continuance of the Gospel in the Acts and the Epistles and the daring reopening of the acts of Jesus, which "He began to do and to teach until the day in which He was taken up"<sup>2</sup> but continued in His church, shows that even the uniqueness of the thirty years was not to be considered as a completely achieved climax, but rather as a potency which would itself still further achieve down the centuries in "greater works" of the Spirit of Christ. Most of the early Christian writers show that they regard the Old Testament as preparatory and not something to be abrogated, timely indeed and accommodated to the times and circumstances of the people to whom it was given,<sup>3</sup> but bearing always the character of revelation, and inasmuch as it bore witness to the timeless, in no need of abrogation.

And there was no undue concern about the mode or method of

<sup>1</sup> *Leg. All.*, III, 60, 61 (I, 121 f.).

<sup>2</sup> *Acts i. 1-2.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Chase: *Chrysostom*, p. 42.

inspiration. Theodore of Mopsuestia held that there were varying degrees of inspiration of the Old Testament. The individual characteristics of the writers were freely acknowledged in Antioch. True, there could be held the idea of ecstatic inspiration, as we find in Tertullian and others we have mentioned, but the inspiration of the Spirit of God in the acts of history was not lost to sight, and historical development has its place in the doctrine of the Cappadocians who followed Origen. Indeed the unity of history under the guidance of God bound up the past with the present and with the hope of the future, so that as often as Christians looked back to Christ's earthly life, they looked forward to the consummation of the age in Christ who was living and active by His Spirit in the Church.

Before passing from this discussion of Scripture the important question of exegesis calls for some notice, if only to show how far the methods were similar among Jews, Christians and Muslims. Someone has said that "the conception of revelation as given once for all led Philo into great difficulties". Because the Old Testament taken literally contained "many things which could not but shock the consciences as well as the intelligence of a cultivated Alexandrian acquainted with Greek philosophy, the expedient of Allegory was necessary". The method had been adopted long before in the interpretation of pagan myths which growing enlightenment refused to accept in their literal meaning. Plato said that even the allegorization of such myths was wrong.<sup>1</sup> It might be held that allegorization has its uses, but it is questionable whether the exaggerations of the allegorical method are to be preferred to those things which some people thought offensive in the Old Testament. Strictly speaking it is the historical method rather than the allegorical method which can give us the clue to these matters. And when we find that Philo tried to prove the perpetual motion<sup>2</sup> of the spheres by the flaming sword of the Cherubim, some realization dawns upon us of how pernicious the system could become. The danger was that the revealed book might be regarded as a "divine cryptogram" with a double purpose to hide the truth from those who, it was held, could not profit by it or were unworthy to receive it, and to give the relish of a mystery to the favoured. Indeed it is difficult to see how, without initiation into a mystery, either the Greek allegorists or Philo could find what they taught in the texts they dealt with. Some points in Philo's system may be noted.<sup>3</sup> Repeated words, anagrams, puns, two meanings of a single word were all pressed into service. Numbers also had special esoteric meaning. Because the senses are five, five implies the

<sup>1</sup> Plato : *Republic*, ii. 377-78.

<sup>2</sup> *Cherub*, 7-10 (i. 142-44).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. SS. *Ab. et Cain*, 15 (i. 174), *Fragments*, ii. 658 f.; *Quaest. et Sol. in Gen.*, iv. 2; *Abrah.*, 15, 24, 25; *Somniis*, i. 13, 17 (i. 631, 636), etc.

sensible ; because the dimensions are three, that number denotes corporeality and so on.<sup>1</sup> Animals<sup>2</sup> are held to be symbolic, e.g., the serpent means lust. Proper names yield new meanings by etymological analysis.

Clement and Origen are influenced by this and so use allegory. In this way Biblical history was changed into moral fables. Origen had a threefold method of interpretation. Scripture, like man, was tripartite.<sup>3</sup> Its body was the literal and historical ; its soul was the ethical ; its intellect (or spirit) was the metaphysical. The bodily-literal tends to error<sup>4</sup> but is not therefore worthless.<sup>5</sup> The adept should seek the spiritual sense.<sup>6</sup> The spiritual sense is twofold : allegorical and anagogical. If the literal sense is worthy of God, valuable to men and according to reason it is to be trusted. If it implies something absurd or unworthy, it must be rejected. But no one should be content with the literal because this would stultify inquiry.<sup>7</sup> The ethical and intellectual senses are diffused throughout Scripture, but the Scripture is not everywhere literally true. The anagogical is considered to be the most difficult of all. In actual fact, however, Origen only resorted to allegory to explain difficulties, and he was really the founder of the sounder exegetical school of Antioch, basing on a careful examination of the text and sound knowledge of the languages and grammar. The Antiochene school moved further away from allegorism. Eustathius, Diodorus and Theodore all declared themselves against it, though they compromised in favour of typology, considering the Old Testament gave types and the New Testament antitypes, the former foreshadowing and dimly imaging what was found in the latter. Theodore held that Scripture should be interpreted hyperbolically as brought to a higher degree of significance by reference to Christ.<sup>8</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus also made concessions to the esoteric in his *disciplina arcana*<sup>9</sup> although Basil, of the same school tends to literalism and Gregory of Nyssa seeks analogies and tends to Origen's typology. All thought that the plain meaning was particularly for the common people, and in some like Origen and Clement we have "reserve".

When we come to the Muslim exegetes we find that there are the same schools of thought. There are those who consider that the whole of exegesis is an exercise in grammar and are literalist in the extreme. There are those who consider that there is an obvious or literal (*zāhir*)

<sup>1</sup> *Mundi Op.*, 33, 34, 38, 40 (i. 23, 24, 27 and 28).

<sup>2</sup> *Leg. All.* ii. 7 (i. 70 ff.).

<sup>3</sup> *Hom. v. on Lev.*, sect. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Com. on Gal.*, Cap. III.

<sup>5</sup> *De Princ.*, I, iv. 12, 14.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, I, iv. 2.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, iv. 15, 16.

<sup>8</sup> *Com. in Zach.*, ix. 554 f.

<sup>9</sup> *Or.*, xl. 45.

and a hidden, esoteric (*bāṭin*) meaning of the text. Some resort to the method of typology (*mithāl* or *tamthīl*), while others consider that various degrees of allegorical and rational interpretation (*ta'wīl*) are necessary to give a rational meaning to the text. Baghdādī tells us that the Janāhites were such inveterate allegorists that they even allegorized the laws of Islam.<sup>1</sup> Shi'ites, because they often held that an unwritten revelation was handed down orally alongside the written Law, found in this a reason to interpret the written Law in an esoteric sense, and some extremists insisted that such laws as the performance of the ritual prayer and the *Hajj* were not enjoined, but that these were figures for a deeper mystery. The Sufis often profess to initiate people into such a mystery. In this there was often a good motive and an attempt to "internalize" the law and escape formalism. It is interesting that Philo also found that it was necessary to guard against an even deeper allegorism than his own which led to antinomianism, or, at least, to the neglect of the outward observances of the Law. Though the Sabbath is really to teach the power of the Unbegotten and the passivity of creatures, it is not therefore to be profaned by ceasing to observe the literal command. Circumcision, though it typifies renunciation of lust, is still to be observed as an outward rite. In other words, a sacramental position is adopted towards these things. With regard to the possibility that the written Law might point to an unwritten Law of deeper significance which was handed down through the elect, this is expressed in the Rabbinical schools.<sup>2</sup> Moses received the Torah from Sinai, and he delivered it to Joshua, and he to the Elders, and the Elders to the Prophets, and the men of the Great Synagogue received it from the Prophets.<sup>3</sup> "Moses, our teacher, wrote down the whole Law with his own hand before he died . . . ; the *Mitzvah*, that is, the interpretation of the Law, he did not write down; but he commanded it to the Elders, and to Joshua, and the rest of Israel . . . therefore this is called, 'Oral Tradition'."<sup>4</sup>

The following centuries amplified and developed the system of exegesis in Islam, but there can be no doubt that the beginnings are to be found in the period under review. "In the beginning there were two distinct opinions. One party considered that there were no mysteries in the Qur'ān. All the matters of belief could be understood in the same way both by the ordinary people and those who had made a special study, and the proof of these articles of belief was the same for the commonalty as for the elect", but the other school resorted to *ta'wīl*.<sup>5</sup> Ibn Rushd<sup>6</sup> said, "It is handed down from many of the

<sup>1</sup> *Baghdādī*: *Farg*, Pt. IV, Cap. vi.

<sup>2</sup> *Pirke Aboth*, i. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Charles: *Apoc. and Pseudep. of O.T.* note on *Sirach*, viii. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Charles: *ad loc. cit.* from Maimonides.

<sup>5</sup> Shibli: *Al Ghazzālī*, p. 111.

<sup>6</sup> *In Fasl ul Maqāl*.

ancients of the first century that there is an outward and an inward *Shari'a*, and it is not necessary that the one who has not the ability to understand the inward should be taught it." Some authority was found for this in the tradition of the saying of 'Ali which Bukhāri records, " Speak that which the people can understand and leave what they cannot. Do you wish that people should falsify God and the Prophet of God ? " In his preface to the *Ihya*, Al Ghazzālī says, " No man of understanding can deny the division of the (Quranic) conceptions or doctrines into hidden and manifest. Only those people deny it who in their childhood have learned something and clung to it, and so cannot progress to the high ranks of the learned." With regard to the doctrines of God's essential nature, and the character of and the happenings at the Last Day, he says that these are of two classes, " One is to know the proofs of the external doctrine (i.e., the outward or apparent sense or literal meaning) without the consideration of its mysteries, the second stage is to understand the mysteries and to discover the pith of their meaning, and to search out the fundamental reality of the external and apparent. To attain to both is not the duty of all." In *Jawāhir ul Qur'ān*, Al Ghazzālī writes in reference to the events of the Last Day, " And in this the two parties are mentioned, in relation to *Hashr*, *Nashr*, *Hisāb*, *Mizān* and *Sirāt*. And there is a literal meaning of these things and an inward meaning which is obscure and is life itself to the elect." And in *Qustās Mustaqm* he writes in much detail, " God said, ' Call people to God's way by means of wisdom, by means of admonition and argue with them in a reasonable way.' It should be known that the people called by wisdom are one, those by admonition other and those by argument other, and if wisdom be used towards those who should be addressed in admonition, they will be harmed, just as it is harmful for a sucking child to eat the flesh of a bird. And if exhortation is used with those people who have wisdom, they will dislike it just as if human milk were given a strong man to drink. And if exhortation be not in seemly fashion, it will be like giving a Bedouin flour of wheat to eat though he is only accustomed to eat dates. And these are the abstruse matters which are only attained by the light which comes from the realm of prophethood."

Apart from esoteric explanation of the Scripture there is also the esoteric use of Scripture to make it the medium of mystical experience. Massignon, speaking of the experience of Hallāj, refers to the Muslim mystic's recitation of Scripture, where God is speaking in the first person, until in ecstasy the divine speaks through a super-personal consciousness. In this connexion we may point to the invocation of the name of God which stands before the revelations which the Prophet gives in the first person, fulfilling the command to recite, which was the first command at his call. The world has the significance of " pro-

claim " as we can see also in the Old Testament in relation to the oracles which the prophets deliver in the name of the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

#### (IV) TRADITION

What has to be said in regard to tradition and its relation to Scripture may be briefly said, for though the historicity, the growth, collection and criticism of Muslim *Hadīth* are subjects which, treated adequately, would require more space than can be spared here, these questions do not affect very materially the theology proper with which we are concerned, except in a few particulars. Beside this there are excellent introductions to the subject, one of the most valuable being the book by Guillaume.<sup>2</sup> The various works of a specialist character by Wensinck are invaluable, and in his *Muslim Creed* he has shown very clearly the relation of the very early development of theology to tradition.

When we have seen how Islam regards the Qur'ān, it is at first surprising to see how Tradition, embodied in *Hadīth*, which in turn embodies the usage or Sunna of the Prophet, comes to an exalted position as revelation almost co-ordinate in authority with the Qur'ān. However, from other points of view it is not surprising at all, for the Qur'ān was not complete, as we have pointed out, and in the fixing of the text of the Qur'ān the memories of men had played a great part, and the actions of the immediate Companions of the Prophet had shown them to have a personal authority which could lead even to the destruction of sacred relics, in the shape of copies of the Qur'ān treasured by more humble followers. The position of such men could not but be stronger as the custodians of the more or less private sayings of the Prophet. It was to these men that people turned for answers to questions which were not answered in the Qur'ān, and the questioners demanded that as far as possible answers should be given as from the mouth of the Prophet. Furthermore, it was a help to the understanding of the Qur'ān itself, if someone knew under what particular circumstances a particular passage had "come down". These circumstances would be known to the immediate companions of the Prophet more than to anyone else, and it is clear from the records we have that the people of his household occupied a unique position in this respect when, for instance, we consider the vast numbers of traditions which come from Ayesha.

It is in the period under review that all the great canonical collections were made, *Bukhārī* (d. 870), *Muslim* (d. 875), *Ibn Hanbal* (d. 885), *Ibn Mājā* (d. 886), *Abū Dā'ūd* (d. 888), *At Tirmidhī* (d. 892) and an *Nasā'i* (d. 915) being the greatest collectors, and *Bukhārī* supreme with *Muslim* a close second.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Amos iv. 5, and Jer. xxxi. 3, and also passages where the word is used for calling upon the name of God " as Jer. x. 25, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Guillaume : *The Traditions of Islam*.

*Hadīth* provides the traditional interpretation of the Qur'ān reported by the Companions, the Followers, and the followers of the Followers, as from the very lips of the Prophet. It also provides for the linking of the Prophet with his community in a way which the Qur'ān could not do. Islam has often been described as a religion of a book, but it would not be too much to claim that by the agency of the traditions, Islam became the religion of Muhammad, most irrevocably bound up with him. Some Muslim writers have compared the *Hadīth* with the records in the Gospels. As the Gospels are dedicated to the task of bringing Christ, His life, His character and His teaching to His disciples, so the *Hadīth* is dedicated to bringing Muhammad into the closest touch with his followers in the centuries which were to follow. "The observance of the *sunna* might, in a way, be called *Imitatio Muhammadiis*."<sup>1</sup> Muslim authorities leave us in no doubt about this. In the *Muwatta'*, Mālik b. Anas said, "The Messenger of Allah said, 'I have left among you two things, and you will never go astray as long as you hold them fast. The one is the word of God and the other is the practice of the Prophet.'"<sup>2</sup> Ibn Hanbal, Abū Dā'ūd, At Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājā all record the tradition from 'Irbaḍ b. Sāriya, "It is your duty to follow my rule of faith and the rule of faith of the rightly guided Khalifas. Seize hold fast on it. Beware new things : for all new things are innovations (heresies) and all innovation is error."<sup>3</sup> And there is another from the same reporter which is to be found in Abū Dā'ūd, "The Messenger of Allah arose and said, 'Does any man of you in his presumption consider that God has not forbidden anything save what is in the Qur'ān ? By Allah ! I have commanded and taught and forbidden things which are certainly like the Qur'ān and more than it.'"<sup>4</sup> Some of the traditions would imply that the Prophet purposely instructed people in the Practice as well as in the Qur'ān. "Send us men to teach us the Qur'ān and Sunna."<sup>5</sup> "The Faith has settled in the depth of their hearts. They have learned Qur'ān and Sunna."<sup>6</sup> Sometimes the conclusion is drawn quite explicitly that this means that the Qur'ān and the Sunna are jointly authoritative, but this is only in the later traditionalists, e.g., Dārimī, who says, "A prohibition by the Prophet of Allah is equal to a prohibition by Allah,"<sup>7</sup> and "Gabriel used to come down with the *sunna* just as he used to come down with the Qur'ān".<sup>8</sup> Then the relation between the two comes to be expressed by the terms *Wahī matlū'*, i.e., unrecited revelation, for the Qur'ān and *Wahī ghayr matlū'*, i.e., unrecited

<sup>1</sup> Wensinck in *Encyc. of Islam* art. *Sunna*.

<sup>2</sup> *Mishkat* : *Kitāb ul Imān* (on relying on Qur'ān and Tradition).

<sup>3</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Muslim : *Imāra*, 147.

<sup>6</sup> Bukhārī : *Riqāq*, bāb, 35.

<sup>7</sup> *Intro. Bāb* 48.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

revelation, for the *Hadīth*. It is held that the Sunna may agree with the Qur'ān completely, may be explanatory of the Qur'ān, or may be completely unconnected with it. This, of course, is the final pronouncement, and there is evidence that this was not so dogmatically stated in the early times.

"The large mass of materials contained in the canonical collections, though it received its final form in the middle of the third century A.H., covers a period reaching no farther than the beginning of the second century."<sup>1</sup> The chief interest is in practical matters or *Fiqh* and not in theological questions. Here it is well to remember that while technically "tradition" is used for the *Hadīth* and *Sunna*, it would be just as legitimately applied to the consensus of opinion which was very largely determinative of the *Hadīth* and *Sunna*. This is *Ijmā'* and in the Islamic system it is placed after Qur'ān and *Hadīth* but historically it may be questioned whether this is its rightful place. When the need arose for the establishment of rules for the practice of the religion, the practice ('*amal*) of Medina was of primary importance. This is to be found in the *Muwatta'* of Mālik b. Anas. The testimony of the lips was to the sayings of the Prophet and the testimony of the members was to the acts that he did. About both there had to be a consensus of opinion. If the community was agreed, then there was little more to be said. Considering how new "traditions" arose as new developments were met with, what could have been the determining factor if not the general trend of belief or the majority opinion? Wensinck<sup>2</sup> gives a good illustration of this "genesis of *Hadīth*" from the questions of Ibn ud Dailāmī put to Ubayy b. Ka'b requiring a saying of the prophet about predestination.

The same writer remarks that though the Mu'tazilites were actively engaged in controversy about theological matters during the period when traditions were being collected, there is little to be gleaned about their side of the controversy. This must be partly due to the fact that even if the Mu'tazilites could have claimed some sayings of the Prophet in support of their opinions, it was highly unlikely that any tradition with the name of a Mu'tazilite in the chain of authentication (*isnād*) would be likely to find acceptance. Muslim tells us,<sup>3</sup> on the authority of Ibn Sirīn, that when dissension broke out about any matter, the first question which was asked was, "What is your authority?" If the names of the authorities revealed *Ahl us Sunna*, i.e., people who adhered to the Usage, then the *hadīth* was accepted because the *sanad* or certification was acceptable. The contents of the *hadīth* were apparently then not subject to question at all. Now it seems fairly clear that when the heretics were rejected from the certification of any

<sup>1</sup> Wensinck: *Muslim Creed*, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Bāb ul Iṣnād min ad Dīn* in the *Sahīḥ* of Muslim.

*hadīth* there must have been a prior understanding of what heresy was, and it seems fair to say that with the Qur'ān as a support the majority interpretation gained the day and was able to declare such and such persons heretical. The very word for heresy is *bid'a*, which is "innovation". So what was in accord with the opinion of the time, and what could escape being dubbed "new" was the test to be applied; by this the people were first led to the men who taught what was believed at the time, and on their authority accepted the traditions as really from the prophet. What really happens in a case like this is that a previously established opinion is strengthened by going to those who agree and accepting only those records of past sayings or practices certified by them. There is an interdependence here which, if it resulted in a coherent, consistent and constant witness to certain facts, principles and pronouncements, might be an effective witness to history and a source of strength. But when, as we find, tradition keeps pace with developments in a remarkable way, it seems more in accord with the facts to say that the body of *hadīth* grew out of the consensus of opinion, rather than that the *hadīth* produced the consensus. This, of course, only applies to the traditions as a whole and as they now appear to us in the collections. It must again be insisted that the traditions were not sufficiently examined to enable a coherent and rational body of tradition to be produced. The books of traditions which we now possess contain numerous contradictions. This would make it appear that the *isnād* was at last no protection, and that unscrupulous people could as easily forge the *isnād* as they could manufacture new traditions.

But is it fair to say that such was the case? The Muslim records themselves leave no doubt that traditions were forged. When *Bukhārī* could choose only 7,300 traditions from a mass of 600,000, an average of about seventy-five a day for every day of the Prophet's public life from his call to his death, there must have been a host of false traditions. If there were no forged traditions how explain the contradictions which are even at present extant? We have to attribute these contradictions either to the Prophet himself, which seems highly improbable if not impossible, or to the transmitters of *hadīth*, which seems most likely. We are told also that many eminent Muslims called the *hadīth* into question. *Ad Dāraqutnī* does so, and *Ibn 'Abd ul Barr* and *An Nawawī* criticise many of them from a rational point of view, and especially those which put the Prophet in an unfavourable light. It may here be said that tradition has dealt very unkindly and unworthily with the Prophet in many instances. "In nothing do we see pious men more given to falsehood than in tradition." This is the saying attributed to two early Muslims, *'Āsim an Nabil* (d. A.H. 212) and *Yahyā b. Sa'īd* (d. A.H. 191).<sup>1</sup>

It is also recorded that there were those who challenged the use of

<sup>1</sup> Nicholson : *Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 145.

*hadīth* from the very outset. (We have even the peculiar phenomenon appearing of the condemnation of the collection of *hadīth* in *Hadīth* itself.) There is a long and perhaps the earliest account of this in the *Kitāb ul Umm* of Imām Shāfi‘ī.<sup>1</sup> Speaking in the language of the objector, the Imām says, “ You are an Arab, and the Qur’ān was sent down in the language of the people to whom you yourself belong. You remember it well and in it God has sent down several duties. If any person doubtful about the Qur’ān should doubt a single letter of these, you would exhort him to repent, and if he repented it would be better or else you would kill him. God Himself has said in the Qur’ān (Sura xvi. 41) ‘(We have sent down a book) clearly explaining everything.’ In that case how can it be lawful for you or for anyone else to say about something which God has made obligatory sometimes that it is a common duty (*farad ul āmm*) and sometimes that it is particular, sometimes that there is an obligation in this matter and in that supererogation? And there are many more kinds of differentiation. You have one or two or three traditions which you report as from one man, then from a second, and then from a third, until finally you carry it back to the Messenger of Allah . . . I find that you do not find any of the adherents of your school of thought, with whom you have intercourse and who are considered foremost in memory and truthfulness . . . to be free from error or mistake in *Hadīth*, but I have found you saying about many of them, ‘ So and so in this *hadīth*, and so and so in that have made a mistake ’ . . . You put these traditions in the place of the Book of Allah and use them in fixing what is *harām* and *halāl*. ”

This is not necessarily rejection of the traditions simply because they are traditions, but only because the reporters were considered to be untrustworthy, but in the course of his refutation of this anonymous correspondent Imām Shāfi‘ī discloses that there were some who rejected tradition solely because it was tradition, and others who rejected it when it could not be regarded as an explanation of the Qur’ān. One of the results of this rejection was that some people held that if the ritual prayer or almsgiving were observed at all, e.g., “ two bows a day or two bows throughout the whole of one’s life ”, then the obligation had been discharged, because there was no time set in the Qur’ān. The times and other particulars could only be found from the *Hadīth* or the *Sunna*. The Imām also says that these people who criticized *Hadīth* did not accept the distinctions of abrogated and abrogating, and of general and particular and were in error.

It is probable, since the Imām refers to Basra as if it might be the home of this school which he is refuting, that the Mu‘tazilites were the opponents of *Hadīth*. Basra was a centre for dialectic theology and

<sup>1</sup> Part VII in the margin *Kitāb ul Ikhtilāf ul Hadīth* the Bāb entitled “ On the statements of that party which rejects all *Hadīth*. ”

the traditionalists and the *mutakallimūn* did not take kindly to one another, the former insisting on the principle of *Naql* in opposition to '*Aql*, i.e., the dogmatic against the rational. Ibn Qutayba<sup>1</sup> says that the dialectical theologians accused the traditionalists of making false and defective *hadīth*, the results of which were the formation of many divergent schools of thought, faction, mutual enmity between Muslims, and the practice of one sect declaring another to be infidel, and each school confirming its tenets by appeal to contradictory traditions. Ibn Qutayba retorts that the same thing could be said about the people who followed their own private opinion (*Ashāb ur Rā'i*) and rejected the consensus of Muslims (*Ijmā'*). Abū Hudhayl was against Nazzām, Najjār against them both, and Hishām b. al Hakam against everybody else. Various principles were accepted by the great Legists of Islam in order to gain some uniformity. The principles of Shāfi'i may be referred to by way of example. His tests were that the majority of the people were agreed and had copied them generally from others, as e.g., the ritual duties in testimony to the Prophet. When there was a possibility of opposing interpretations by the use of *ta'wil* (or allegorical or rationalizing interpretation), the literal and commonly understood meaning should be maintained, and even if an esoteric meaning could be a possible alternative, without consensus of opinion favouring the esoteric, the literal should be preferred. The interpretation on which Muslims have generally agreed or the practice which they have approved, although they cite neither Qur'ān nor *Hadīth* should be accepted as equivalent to unanimously accepted *Hadīth*, because if there had been an intrusion of private opinion this unanimity would not have been found. It will be remembered that Nazzām had said that the majority could agree in something which was untrue, and that a few might preserve the truth. This is reported of Nazzām by Baghdādī in his account of the rationalist's sixteenth and seventeenth heresies.<sup>2</sup> Nazzām seems to have been particularly opposed to *Hadīth*. He said that Abū Huraira, by whom a great number of traditions had been reported about the Prophet, was the worst of liars. He criticized 'Umar and said that he had introduced the postures in prayer and forbidden temporary marriage, etc. He said that Al Walid led the prayers when drunk. He said that Ibn Mas'ūd, lied when he attributed to the Prophet the saying that the one who was predestined to eternal bliss or to eternal misery was so from his mother's womb,<sup>3</sup> and he declared that the story that Muhammad had split the moon was a lie.

In the face of such attacks on those to whom the traditionalists looked as the guarantors of tradition, greater care was taken by the collectors, but rational criticism was practically ruled out. Muslim's

<sup>1</sup> *Kitāb Ta'wil Mukhtalif ul Hadīth*.

<sup>2</sup> *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Bukhārī*: *Sahīh* : *Kitāb ul Qadar*, Bāb 1.

principles are that the men who certify the traditions should be above suspicion, that the authorities should be known to stand in close connexion, that they were actually contemporaries and so could form an unbroken chain, and that it must be proved that they actually met. But when it was axiomatic that certain people were above suspicion this test was inadequate, and the opponents could not agree on this chief point with those pious people who revered the Companions and the Followers.

In theory it was held that the Traditions could not abrogate the Qur'an, and there is an explicit *hadīth* to this effect from Jābir who reported that the Prophet said, "My words do not abrogate the words of God but the words of God abrogate mine, and some of the words of God abrogate others." It is most widely held that this is the exact truth, but in actual practice the knowledge of the abrogating texts cannot be derived from the Qur'an by itself. Either reason must conclude that where contradictory statements are made one statement abrogates another, or this must be known by tradition. Rejecting reason the traditionalists could only decide the question by tradition. Therefore the tradition supplies the information whereby the Qur'an is known to be abrogated in certain places. Thus while the theory is as stated the actual practice is that the *Hadīth* is the authority for abrogation.

When we turn to the Christian side and inquire into the question of tradition in relation to Scripture and the fixing of doctrine, we notice some most remarkable contrasts with the Muslim ideas. The first function of tradition in the Church was the preservation of the records of the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ until such time as they were committed to writing. Here in contrast to the impossible number of sayings attributed to Muhammad, in the Synoptic Gospels, allowing for some measure of composition in the longer speeches, there are less than three hundred sayings of Christ recorded. This small number was recognized as canonical, and the temptation to augment the number of sayings from the apocryphal books and to raise them to the status of the canonical is apparently quite non-existent. In the early Christian Church, as in the young Muslim community, there must have arisen difficulties which would make the believers long for some pronouncement from their Lord to set their doubts at rest, or to give the benefit of His authority to some specific idea or course of action, but whereas the early Muslim community could only seek the solution of its difficulties by reference to laws bearing the imprimatur of the Prophet, the early Christian community felt born into a new freedom and, with a new creative life of faith, looked rather to things to come than to the bonds of a legal system fixed in the past. In this fundamental matter Islam and Christianity stand in contrast down through the long course of their history. The ten-

dencies to legalism in some of the Christian writers of the first centuries are obvious, particularly in Tertullian, but the resistance to legalism is a still more remarkable phenomenon. Even when the period for consolidation and preservation of the sacred repository of faith against innovation imposed a more rigid rule, there was no attempt to support this by wide canonical additions endowed with an irresistible authority by attributing them to Christ. Councils might be violent in expression and rigid in their formularies, but there is evidence that they were not so rigid as later interpretation would make out. It is a fact also that the Councils were the arenas of free and even violently free debate ; and it is a remarkable fact that similar Councils find no place in Islam. The nearest approach to councils in Islam is the assembly of learned men at the court of such Caliphs as took an interest in theological matters, and the freest of these were when the Mu'tazilites were in the ascendancy.

Thus the tradition of the elders was in Christianity not the rigidity which Christ had condemned in the Gospels.<sup>1</sup> "Ye have made void the word of God because of your traditions" stood in the canon which tradition ratified, and Christian tradition held fast to the word of God, but allowed it to be a living word. Extra-canonical expressions of sound tradition are to be found in the Apostle's Creed and in the *Te Deum*, but these were not fenced by pseudo-history. There was no need to invest these things with a fictitious authority, since they expressed the living devotion and worship of Christians. Christians might say, "We have to use that form which has been consecrated to us by the usage of the saints and in obedience to the will of Christ to show forth His death until He come", but with regard to the performance of ritual worship in Islam, the minutest details were held to have been laid down in the very beginning by the Prophet, and deviation even in development was in theory not possible because one age had stereotyped the ritual by ascribing it to the usage of Muhammad.

There was in Islam and in Christianity the need to restrain caprice if what was central and indispensable was to be preserved, but in the manner in which this was done the two religions stand in the greatest contrast. A danger in which both Islam and Christianity stood was in coming to a conclusion that the function of the living society, which resulted in tradition, ceased at some definite point of time in the past. Illustrations of that danger could be given from the history of Christianity, but we feel that, with all that might be said to the contrary, the consciousness that the Church lived in the dispensation of the Spirit, who was to guide into all truth and take of the things of Christ and declare them to men, effectively opposed the danger, whereas in Islam the "dead hand of tradition" was laid upon it with disastrous consequences. Judaism codified its legalism under the name of

<sup>1</sup> Compare Matt. xv. 3 and 6; Mark vii. 8-9; Col. ii. 8 with 2 Thess. ii. 15, iii. 6.

## THE THEOLOGICAL POSITION IN THE NEAR EAST

Moses<sup>1</sup> and Islam under the name of Muhammad, but Christianity has never done this.

### E. THE ORDERING OF THE UNIVERSE

#### (I) THE QURANIC DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION.

A careful study of the vocabulary of the Qur'ān makes it abundantly clear that the overwhelming emphasis of the Qur'ān is on the dominant will of God. The primary terms used in expressing this idea are derived from the roots QDR and QD'. The doctrine of Predestination is known among Muslims as *taqdir*. But beside these words, even those which can be considered to be simple verbs expressing the commonest actions as e.g., "to will", "to permit", "to decide", "to intend", "to purpose", "to wish" are used with the Divine Being as the subject in such a manner and in such a majority of cases as to suggest that man has very little to do with the ordering of his own life. A large part of the analysis of the vocabulary of the Qur'ān in so far as it is conceived to throw light on the Muslim doctrine of Foreordination, the Decrees of God, His Intention and Will, has been relegated to an appendix at the end of this volume.<sup>2</sup>

In Sura lxxxi. 28 there is a passage where the willing of man and God's will are brought into violent contrast. "It is but a reminder to the worlds to whosoever of you chooses to go straight; but ye will not choose, except God, the Lord of the World, should choose." Almost invariably when man is the subject of a sentence ascribing purposive action, ability or choice, the particular human agents in the action are either arrogating to themselves a power which they do not rightfully possess, or are conceived as being released from the compulsions and restraints of this life by their emancipation in Paradise, or they are exalted persons such as Muhammad, Khidr, Adam and Eve. Rebels against God like Pharaoh can apparently arrogate will to themselves unrighteously.

There is a verse which is rather ambiguous and which might be taken as attributing a power of choice to man. This is Sura xviii. 28. It is ordinarily translatable as "The truth is from your Lord, so let him who will, believe; and let him who will, disbelieve". But even here, 'Abbās, an orthodox commentator, would prefer it to read with the following meaning, "Let him whom He will, believe; and let him whom He will disbelieve", making God the subject of the verb and the relative pronoun "man" objective.

The terrifying character of God's will and suggestions of its amoral character are to be found in the following verses: "When God wishes evil to a people, there is no averting it nor have they any protector

<sup>1</sup> Cf. S. R. Driver: *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, pp. iv.-lvii. quoted in full in this connection by Guillaume: *The Traditions of Islam*, 53 (note).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 3.

beside Him" (Sura xiii. 12). "What is it that can save you from God, if He wishes you evil or wish you mercy?" (Sura xxxiii. 17). In Sura lxxii. 10 we find that the *jinn* came to Muhammad and said, "And verily, we know not whether evil be meant for those who are in the earth, or if their Lord desires right by them." The answer is given in verses 20 ff. Noah says, "God will only bring it on you if He pleases, nor can ye make Him helpless, nor will my advice profit you, should I wish to advise you, if God wish to lead you into error" (Sura xi. 35-36).

In the following the relation of God's intentions to retributive justice is emphasized : Sura iii. 170, "God wills not to make for them (unbelievers) a portion in the future life ; but for them is mighty woe" ; Sura v. 54, "God wishes to fall on them for some sins of theirs" ; Sura viii. 7, "God wishes to prove the truth true by His words and to cut off the hind parts of those who disbelieve, to prove the truth true and to make the vain vain, although the sinners are averse" ; Sura ix. 55, "Let not their wealth please you nor their children, God only wishes to torment them therewith in the life of this world, and that their souls may pass away while still they disbelieve."

On the contrary, God's mild intentions are declared in the following passages : Sura xxviii. 4, "We wished to be gracious to those who were weakened in the earth and to make them spiritual leaders and to make them heirs" ; Sura iii. 104, "God desires not injustice (*zulm*) unto the worlds" ; Sura iv. 31-32, "God wishes to explain to you and to guide you into the ordinances of those who were before and to turn towards you, for God is knowing, wise. God wishes to turn towards you, but those who follow their lusts wish that ye swerve with a mighty swerving. God wishes to make it light for you, for man was created weak" ; Sura v. 9, "God does not wish to make any hindrance for you ; but He wishes to purify you and to fulfil His favour upon you" ; Sura xxxiii. 33, "God only wishes to take away from you the horror as people of His house and to purify you thoroughly."

In any consideration of the Quranic doctrine of Predestination and the Divine Will, passages which speak of the Divine Guidance must also be taken into consideration. In this respect the passages may be conveniently classified under three headings, corresponding to the use of three roots namely, *HDY*, *DLL*, *TB*, expressing "guidance", "leading astray" and "sealing" respectively.

God is called in the Qur'an *Al Hādi*, the Guide. The more general teaching about the Divine Guidance is to be found in such passages as the following : Sura xxii. 53, "God will surely guide those who believe into a right way" ; Sura xxv. 33, "Thus have we made for every prophet an enemy from among the sinners ; but thy Lord is good guide and helper enough" ; Sura vi. 80 (Abraham said), "Do ye dispute with me concerning God when He has guided me ?" ; Sura

ii. 114, "Jews will not be satisfied with thee, nor yet the Christians until thou followest their creed. Say, 'God's guidance is the guidance'; and if thou followest their desires after the knowledge that has come to thee, thou hast not then from God a patron or a help"; Sura ii. 181, "God desires what is easy for you and desires not for you what is difficult, that ye may complete the number and say, 'Great is God', for that He has guided you"; Sura vi. 88, "That is God's guidance; He guides those whom He will of His servants and if they associate anything with Him, vain is that which they have worked"; Sura xx. 120, "Then His Lord chose him (Adam) and relented towards him and guided him"; Sura vi. 84-86, "And we gave to him Isaac and Jacob; each did we guide; and Noah we guided before and all his seed—David and Solomon and Job, and Joseph and Moses and Aaron—for thus do we reward those who do good. And Zachariah, John and Jesus and Elias—all righteous ones; and Ishmael and Elisha and Jonas and Lot each one have we preferred above the worlds and of their fathers and their seed and their brethren, we have chosen them and guided them into a right way"; Sura xc. 9-10, "Have we not made for him two eyes and a tongue and two lips and guided him in the two highways, but he will not attempt the steep"; Sura x. 36, "God guides unto the truth. Is then He who guides unto the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who guides only if he be himself guided?"; Sura xxxviii. 4, "God speaks the truth and He guides to the path"; Sura iv. 31, "God wishes to explain to you and to guide you into the ordinances of those who were before you."<sup>1</sup>

In many passages the "Book" is the agent in the divine guidance. Typical verses are: Sura xxxi. 1-4, "These are the signs of the wise book, a guidance and a mercy to those who do well, who are steadfast in prayer and give alms, and who of the hereafter are sure. These are in guidance from their Lord and these are the prosperous"; and Sura xxxvii. 118, "We gave them both (Moses and Aaron) the perspicuous book and we guided them to the right way."<sup>2</sup>

God's guidance by more general revelation is found in Moses' fire (Sura xx. 10), the promise to Adam (Suras xx. 121 and ii. 36). The former Scriptures are the means of God's guidance, e.g., the Law and the Gospel (Suras iii. 2; xii. 111). "Their stories were a lesson to those endowed with minds. It was not a tale forged, but a verification of what was before it, and a detailing of everything and a guide and a mercy to a people who believe" (the Law of Moses in Suras xxxii. 23; xl. 56; xxviii. 43; vii. 153; xvii. 2; v. 48; vi. 91, 155; the Gospel, Sura v. 50).

In the following verses God is said both to lead and to mislead:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Suras xxvii. 64; xxvi. 78; xlvi. 26; lxxxvii. 1-3; lxxvi. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Also Suras ii. 1, 91, 154, 170; iii. 132; iv. 115; vi. 158; vii. 50, 202; ix. 33; x. 58; xvi. 66, 91, 104; xvii. 96; xx. 49; xxvii. 2, 79; xl. 44; xliv. 10, 19; xlvi. 28.

Sura xiii. 27, "God leads whom He will astray and guides unto Him those who turn again"; Sura ii. 24, "He leads astray many and guides many"; Sura xxxv. 9, "Verily, God leads astray whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases"; Sura vi. 125, "Whomsoever God wishes to guide He expands his breast to Islam but whomsoever He wishes to lead astray, He makes his breast tight and strait as though he would mount up into heaven; thus does God set His horror on those who do not believe."<sup>1</sup>

The terrible idea is expressed that no guidance can possibly avail against the contrary determination of God. Sura xxx. 28, "Who shall guide Him whom God has led astray?"; Sura xlvi. 22, "Hast thou considered him who takes his lusts for his God and God leads him astray willingly, and has set a seal upon his hearing and his heart, and has placed upon his eyesight dimness? Who then shall guide him after God?"; Sura xxxix. 24, "God has sent down the best of legends, a book uniform and repeating; whereat the skins of those who fear their Lord do creep! Then their skins and their hearts soften at the remembrance of God. That is the guidance of God. He guides therewith whom He will. But he whom God leads astray there is no guide for him"; Sura vii. 192, "But if ye call them to guidance, they will not follow you. It is the same to them if thou dost call them or if thou dost hold thy tongue"; Sura xvi. 39, "If thou art ever so keen for their guidance, verily, God guides not those who go astray nor have they any helpers."<sup>2</sup>

But in the following verse we find that God's guidance can be resisted: Sura xli. 16, "As for Thamud we guided them, but they preferred blindness to guidance and the thunderclap of the torment of abasement caught them for what they had earned—but we saved those who believed and who did fear." Sometimes it is stated that the divine guidance is contingent upon faith, e.g., Sura ii. 209, "God guided those who did believe"; Sura ii. 266, "God guides not the unbelieving folk"; Sura iii. 80, "How shall God guide people who have disbelieved after believing and after bearing witness that the Messenger is true, and after there come to them manifest signs?"; Sura iv. 166, "Verily those who disbelieved and are unjust, God will not pardon them, nor will He guide them on the road, save the road to Hell to dwell therein for aye;—that is easy enough for God"; Sura iv. 174, "Those who believe He will guide them to Himself by the right way"; Sura x. 9, "Verily, those who believe and do what is right, their Lord guides them by their faith; beneath them shall rivers flow in the gardens of pleasure."<sup>3</sup>

Sometimes the guidance is contingent upon good works. Sura

<sup>1</sup> Similarly in Suras xiv. 4; vii. 154; lxxiv. 34.

<sup>2</sup> See also Suras xxxix. 37; xl. 35; vii. 185; vii. 197; xviii. 50 f.

<sup>3</sup> See also Suras v. 71; ix. 37; xvi. 109; xxxix. 5; xxii. 4; xvi. 106.

ii. 260, "God does not guide the unjust folk"; Sura xlvi. 6, "Those who are slain in God's cause, their work shall not go wrong; He will guide them and set right their mind and will make them to enter into Paradise which He has told them of"; Sura xxix. 69, "Those who fight strenuously for us we will surely guide into our way."<sup>1</sup>

But sometimes, on the contrary, the Divine guidance seems to be given or withheld by the absolute freedom of God. Sura vi. 35, "If God pleased He would bring them all into guidance"; Sura ii. 136, "God's is the East and the West, He guides whom He will unto the right path"; Sura x. 26, "God calls unto the abode of peace and guides whom He will into the right path"; Sura xlvi. 12, "God elects for Himself whom He pleases, and guides unto Himself him who turns repentant."<sup>2</sup>

The verses in which the act of misleading is attributed to God are given above. The words used are derivatives from the root *ḍll*. The name *Mudill* does not occur in some of the lists of the ninety-nine names of God, but it can be seen from the quotations in the previous pages that there is right guidance and guidance in the wrong path, and that both are attributed to God. *Al Mudill* is another name for *mirage*. The name belongs to Satan in Sura xxviii. 14, "And he who was of his sect asked his aid against him who was of his foes, and Moses smote him with his fist and finished him. Said he, 'This is of the work of Satan, verily He is a misleading obvious foe.'" Lane says that the act of *iḍlāl* is attributed to God in two ways: decreeing that one shall err or stray because he has done so already, and "God's so constituting a man that when he observes and pursues a certain course or way of acting or the like, whether it be such as is commended or such as is discommended, he habituates himself to it and esteems it pleasant, and keeps to it and finds it difficult to turn from it, wherefore it is said that custom is a second nature." It is, however, quite possible that the term may be used in a secondary sense, meaning "*to allow to stray*". If this latter is the case, then this would mean the attribution of freewill to man in so far as man had the power to resist God and sin against Him.

The last idea we shall notice is this outline of the Quranic teaching is the sealing of the heart by God. *Taba'a* means "he sealed, imprinted or impressed". Creatures are said to receive the impression of God whereby they have a certain disposition or are adapted to a certain thing. In the language of the modern Muslims *Tabī'a* derived from this root has come to be extensively used for "nature" (i.e., created nature) or disposition. Used in the sense of "nature" it is, however, inappropriate to apply it to the divine nature. The term implies

<sup>1</sup> See also Suras xlvi. 19; v. 56, 107; ix. 24; xix. 78; iv. 70; vi. 145; ix. 19; xxviii. 50; xlvi. 9; lxi. 7; lxii. 5; ix. 81, 110; lxi. 5; lxiii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also Suras xxii. 16; xxiv. 35; xxiv. 45.

physical nature. From this it would seem that it is possible to interpret the Quranic references to God's sealing to mean that God has adapted his creatures to certain functions or in certain ways. But if such an interpretation were to be adopted, we should still be faced with the tragic conclusion that God adapts His creatures to unbelief, to hardness of heart ; and one cannot escape the inference that the operation of God represented by the use of this term comes very near to searing the heart, the mind and the moral faculties. It will, however, be remembered that the Old Testament has a parallel usage of the metaphor and that the usual interpretation of this is that God allows the habit to prevail over the mind and heart, so that the consequence of sin is a hardening and resistance to God. If, therefore, the passages in the Qur'ān are to be taken in this sense it should be that God allows the consequences of sin to take their course, but if there is a preventient hardening or sealing of the heart, so that no matter what a man does he cannot repent and do right, then this is a conception of God which the Christian revelation will not permit us to accept. It should also be remembered that the times when some such metaphor is used in the Old Testament, e.g., Job xxxiii. 16, Exod. iv. 21, vii. 3, Isa. vi. 10, are very infrequent and far more often the "hardening" is attributed to the agency of the man who resists God as, e.g., in Zech. vii. 11, and even in the same context in Exodus, "Pharaoh hardened his heart", Exod. viii. 32, and numerous other places. Thus no arbitrary hardening of the heart of man by God can be inferred. So, too, in the Qur'ān the seal is set on the heart of the man who will not believe, i.e., it is a consequence of his unbelief (Sura vii. 99). Sometimes the Qur'ān is reminiscent of the tyranny of Pharaoh as, e.g., in Sura xl. 37, "And those who wrangle about the signs of God without authority having come to them, are greatly hated by God and by those who believe ; thus does God set a stamp on the heart of every tyrant too big with pride." The same idea is present in Sura iv. 154, "But for that they broke their compact and for their disbelief in God's signs, and for their killing the prophets undeservedly, and for their saying, 'Our hearts are uncircumcized', nay ! God hath stamped on them their unbelief, so that they cannot believe, except a few", and Sura xlvi. 18, "Some of them there are who listen to thee, until when they go forth from thee they say to those who have been given the knowledge, 'What is this which he says now ?' These are those on whose hearts God has set a stamp and who follow their lusts." Another passage recalls the passage in Isaiah, "These are they upon whose hearts, hearing and eyesight, God has set a stamp and these are the careless. Without doubt in the next life they will be the losers."<sup>1</sup>

The object of this long exposition of the Quranic doctrine is to try to show that though it is true that the Qur'ān appeals to men as

<sup>1</sup> The other passages are Suras xxx. 59, ix. 94, ix. 88, lxiii. 2-3, vii. 98 x. 75.

though they were possessed of free will, there is overwhelming evidence for the Qur'anic teaching of predestination, and therefore the orthodox Muslim teaching on this point is really rooted in the Islamic scripture. The whole of the ground has been covered so that it may not be thought that a few texts have been selected and others teaching the contrary ignored. We have thus before us the foundation of the later development of the theology as it touched on questions of the Power and Will of God, His justice, the relation of human action to Divine action and kindred subjects.

## (II) EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Wensinck says, "Tradition has not preserved a single *hadīth* in which *liberum arbitrium* is advocated."<sup>1</sup> Examples of the *hadīth* on the subject of predestination are conclusive proof of the fixing of this article of the orthodox faith at an early date. From 'Abdullāh b. 'Umar, "The Apostle of God said, 'God wrote the fate of all creation fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth'",<sup>2</sup> and from the same reporter "The Apostle of God said, 'The hearts of the sons of Adam are between the two fingers of Ar Rahmān like one heart. He turns them as He pleases'."<sup>3</sup> From 'Umar b. al Khattāb, "The Messenger of Allah said, 'Verily, when God creates a servant for Paradise, He causes him to work the works of the people of Paradise till he dies . . . and then causes him to enter into Paradise thereby; when He creates a creature for the fire, He causes him to work the works of the people of Hell until he dies . . . then he causes him to enter the fire thereby'."<sup>4</sup> Abū Hurairā said, "The Prophet said to me, 'The pen has already dried (after writing) what will befall thee'."<sup>5</sup> From Sa'id ul Khudrī, "The Prophet said, 'Every living soul whose coming forth into the world has been written by God must come into being'."<sup>6</sup> There is one *hadīth* in which the Prophet is reported to have deprecated the discussion of the subject.<sup>7</sup> Other traditions will be mentioned when the question of faith and works comes to be dealt with. What we find in the greater number of the traditions on the subject is an unmitigated fatalism and an extreme doctrine of foreordination and reprobation.<sup>8</sup> The idea of predestination is often associated with the conception of a heavenly book in which the decrees are written. From 'Ubāda b. us Sāmit, "Verily the first thing which was created was the Pen. And He said to it

<sup>1</sup> Wensinck: *Muslim Creed*, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> *Mishkāt ul Muṣābiḥ* in *Kitāb ul Īmān*, *Bāb ul Qadar*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Bukhārī: *Sahīb*, *Kitāb ul Qadar* Bāb 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn Mājā: Intro. Bāb 10.

<sup>8</sup> See Guillaume: *Trad. of Islam*, 171 ff.

'Write.' It said, 'What shall I write?' He answered, 'Write the divine decrees.' So it wrote down all that was and all that will be unto eternity."<sup>1</sup>

One of the fiercest controversies in the whole course of Islamic history raged about this doctrine of predestination, and this was apparently one of the earliest causes of divergent opinion during the period under review. One form of the debate was concerned with the problem of evil and the relation of God to evil. Thus Abu'l 'Abbās al Halabī asks, "Tell me about the Devil. Did he wish that Pharaoh should be an infidel?" Abu'l Husayn al Khayyāt answers, "Yes." "Then the Devil overcame God's will." Abu'l Husayn replied, "That is not a necessary assumption. God, may He be exalted, said, 'Satan promises you poverty and commands you to behave in a guilty way. God promises you pardon and grace' and so it is not necessary to assume that Satan's command overcame God's. So it is with the will. If God had willed Pharaoh to believe against his will, he would have believed."<sup>2</sup> This should be compared with what the Damascene says in answer to the question, "*Quem dicis causam esse malorum?*" The Christian is instructed to answer, "It is from our own wilfulness and from the wiles of the Devil."

This controversy which involved the questions of human freedom, the justice of God, the origin of evil and other kindred problems caused the early rift between the Qadarites and the orthodox. Some of the Murjites were Qadarite in their opinion, i.e., they said that man was free to exercise power or, as we would put it, that he had the power of free choice.<sup>3</sup> Qadarite opinions were not confined to the Mu'tazilites. Later on the name is used almost interchangeably with Mu'tazilite, but they are not necessarily equivalent. The reason why the two names were used in this manner was that the majority of the Mu'tazilites held to the Qadarite position. We are informed that the first one to introduce the Qadarite doctrine was Ma'bād ul Juhānī at Basra. Ibn Hajar in the prologue to *Fath ul Bārī*<sup>4</sup> gives a long list of men who took the Qadarite view, and believed in free will. Among these are Sharik b. 'Abdullāh,<sup>5</sup> 'Abdu'l A'la b. 'Abdu'l A'la,<sup>6</sup> 'Abdu'l Wārīth b. Sa'id Tunūrī,<sup>7</sup> 'Atā b. Abi Maimūna,<sup>8</sup> 'Umar Abū Zāyida,<sup>9</sup> Imrān b. Muslim al Qaṣīr,<sup>10</sup> 'Umayr b. Hāfi,<sup>11</sup> 'Awf ul A'rābi al Basrī,<sup>12</sup> Muhammad b. Sawā' al Basrī,<sup>13</sup> Hishām b. Abī 'Abdullāh ud Dastwā'ī,<sup>14</sup> Yahyā b. Hamza al Hadramī,<sup>15</sup> Thawr b. Zayd ad Da'ilī,<sup>16</sup> Thawr b. Yazid

<sup>1</sup> *Mishkāt*, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Murtadā : *Kiṭāb ul Milāl*.

<sup>3</sup> Al Ash'arī : *Maqādīs*, i. 154.

<sup>4</sup> Cairo, p. 460; see Brockelmann, i. 159.

<sup>5</sup> *Tabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd, VI, 263.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, ii. 45.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, ii. 44.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, ii. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Dhahabi : *Mizān ul I'tidāl*, ii. 2028.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 2229.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 2406.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 2444.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 651.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 2205.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 2462.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 1371.

Himsī,<sup>1</sup> Hassān b. ‘Atiya,<sup>2</sup> Hasan b. Dhakwān,<sup>3</sup> Dā’ūd b. Ḥaṣīn,<sup>4</sup> Žakariyā’ b. Ishāq,<sup>5</sup> Salim b. ‘Ajlān,<sup>6</sup> Salām b. Miskīn,<sup>7</sup> Sayf b. Sulaimān Makkī,<sup>8</sup> Kahmas.<sup>9</sup>

Tradition reflects the position after the Qadarite controversy had been settled by the victory of the orthodox party, but many of the early protagonists of the Qadarite doctrine were men who were famous for their expertness in the science of tradition. This is a most interesting statement by a modern writer.<sup>10</sup> Taking it in conjunction with the absence of canonical traditions supporting the Qadarite position it is very significant. Some of these traditionalists who are described as Mu’tazilites are Sa’id b. Abī ‘Urūba,<sup>11</sup> Qutāda b. Da’āma,<sup>12</sup> Hishām ad Dastawā’ī, Sa’id b. Ibrāhim and Simāk b. Harb,<sup>13</sup> of whom the last four are commended for their proficiency in the science of tradition even by Ibn Hanbal; they are also so described in Dhahabī’s *Tadhkirat ul Huffāz* and further authority is to be found in the references given in the footnotes. As to whether these men were Mu’tazilites as well as Qadarites, in the confusion of the two names, it is a little difficult to decide. Baghdādī regularly uses Qadarite for Mu’tazilite and so does Dhahabī.

To examine this controversy more closely it is necessary to remember the political conditions of the day. It was a time of war not only in the prosecution of conquests, but within Islam itself. Mu’āwiya had wrested the Caliphate from ‘Ali, and the Umayyads were established as the rulers of Islam. The Muslim world has always marked off the period of the four rightly-guided Khalifas. With the death of ‘Ali a new departure had been made. In the very nature of the case the Companions would suffer eclipse. The pious of Medina and the pious of Basra may not have had everything in common, but both looked askance at the triumph of the Umayyads. The former were reduced to quiescence by the subtle argument of the new rulers from the *fait accompli*. Their position could be attributed to the will of Allah. If people complained that the new rulers were wine-bibbers and licentious, they could be silenced with, “What is, is by God’s will. We believe in the predestination of good and evil.” So, though the pious of Medina might be shocked, they could not retort as the pious of Basra could. Ma’bad asked the mystic Hasan Baṣrī how far the Umayyad’s defence of themselves by the doctrine of predestination was correct? He replied, “These enemies of Allah are liars.” There is some evidence that the opponents of the doctrine of predestination

<sup>1</sup> Dhahabī: *Mizān ul I’tidāl*, i. 1373.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 3580.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 1868.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 2895.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 1805.

<sup>10</sup> Shibli: *‘Ilm ul Kalām*, 29–30.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 2553.

<sup>11</sup> Dhahabī, i. 3186.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 2821.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 2778.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 3004. This man was a Murjite.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 3492.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 3299.

were persecuted by the Umayyads. Thus Ghaylān Dimashqi who opposed 'Umar b. 'Abd ul 'Azīz was mutilated by Hishām 'Abdu'l Malik shortly after he came to the throne and finally put to death.

The Umayyads probably supported the doctrine of predestination, and thereby strengthened the hands of the traditionalists, not because they had any great conviction of its truth as a theological tenet, but because it suited their purpose, and was in intelligible relationship with the victories they were winning for Islam. It was this latter fact which did a good deal to lessen the opposition from the Medinotes. The Umayyads glorified Islam and raised the standard of Allah. Was not their success due to Allah? How could the Medinotes deny this? Could anything but the fatalistic view prevail in a time such as this? With marked ethical fervour, the Qadarites made a protest which shows that they were not bound by the traditionalist point of view. They found their argument against predestination strengthened by the fact that it was used to support the position of the people who had been responsible for laying sacrilegious hands on members of the Prophet's family. Neither could the doctrine of predestination comfort those who had seen the downfall and martyrdom of 'Ali. Hence in addition to the Mu'tazilites, the Shi'ites also held to their opposition to predestinarian doctrine. There can be hardly any doubt that on the whole the Mu'tazilite group was strongly anti-Umayyad, but we still hear of some who were in close association with it, and while one instance of persecution has been given, it must be remembered that the reason for that was political rather than theological. In many respects, so long as theology did not interfere with their position, the Umayyads seem to have exhibited tolerance or perhaps indifference. The use they made of Christians is an example of this. It is fairly certain that there were rationalistic tendencies among the people at the Umayyad court. It was here in all probability that certain influences from Christianity touched Islam. The Mu'tazilites were the first to use dialectic in Islamic theology, and this they may well have learned from Christians. The fact that the Christians also held to the doctrine of freewill and human responsibility is also significant when we come to ask why the Qadarites diverged so much from the traditional predestinarianism. Some at least of the Umayyads were favourably inclined to the Mu'tazilites. Yazid b. Walid was probably himself a Mu'tazilite and when he rose against Walid his predecessor in A.D. 744, one of his helpers was 'Amr b. 'Ubayd, a Mu'tazilite leader.

Here it should be said that the name Qadarite which is given to the *opponents* of the doctrine of Predestination (*Qadar*) seems rather confusing. The meaning of it is that whereas most of the orthodox believed that *Qadar* was the prerogative of the Divine, there were those who believed that *qadar* could not be so limited and that men, too, had the power to do right or wrong. Thus those who professed

such a view were called Qadarites because they ascribed "power" to man. The earlier Qadarites, if ever they could be said to have formed a distinct sect and were not rather a cross-section of many different sects, were at a later date merged into the Mu'tazilites who rose in Basra. The impetus of this sect was piety and ethics, but its end was in rationalism. The sect proclaimed itself or was known as "*Ahl ul 'Adl wa't Tawhīd*", i.e., the Adherents of Justice and Unity. They could not believe that God was the Author of the evil deeds of men. Shahrastānī<sup>1</sup> says, "The Mu'tazilites hold unanimously that man decides and creates his acts both good and evil and that he deserves reward or punishment for what he does in the world to come. In this way God is guarded from association with anything evil or wrong or with any act of unbelief or wickedness, because if He created the wrong He would be wrong and if He created righteousness (justice) He would be just." "Justice" as used by this school has more of the force of the Greek δικαιοσύνη in its widest sense. The Quranic authority on which they built was Sura ii. 286, "God will not require of the soul save what it is capable of", whence they taught that Allah does not burden anyone more than he has capacity for, and what he earns stands to his credit and what evil he acquires stands against him. "Allah is not unjust to his servants" (Sura xxii. 10). "Lo ! Allah wrongs not by so much as a grain's weight, and if it's a good work he doubles it and bestows from Himself a mighty recompense" (Sura iv. 44). The Mu'tazilites were concerned to allow no man to find an excuse for wrong-doing under the cloak of a doctrine of irresistible foreordination. Their ethical earnestness is revealed in the way they were called the "people of admonishment or threat". They could not allow the idea of intercession for the same reason, because they thought that this introduced a sort of favouritism into the divine justice. The orthodox were much more lenient in their view. Wāsil and those of his school were also known as the "people of repentance". They belong to the intensely religious circle which produced Hasan Baṣrī and Rābi'a ul 'Adawiya and kindred mystics. They show a keen sense of the evil of sin.

They held like the Christians that God had foreknowledge of man's sin, but that His knowledge did not compel men to commit sin. They also diverged from the absolutism which characterized the "orthodox" conception of God. When God is considered to be dominant power He is not subject to the action of any other and nothing can be conceived as incumbent upon Him. This was the majority opinion, and it has been described as due to a Semitic tendency to ascribe everything to divine action. No one can question God's commands. "It is in His power to forgive sinners and to punish those who do right." If one would magnify his power to the uttermost it is deemed necessary to

<sup>1</sup> *Mīlū wa Nihāl* (Cureton), p. 30.

contemplate the possibility of His changing a pebble into a mountain in the twinkling of an eye to make night day, heat cold, and water stop flowing. In the eyes of a man of this opinion, the things we interpret as causes are no causes, and man does not control even his own deeds. Whatever man does God is doing. This involves many things. For one thing it means that God's ordination is not based on benevolence or goodwill, another, there is nothing in the world which is the cause of anything else, and so there are no properties or qualities or causality inherent in things. It means also that if God should punish the good without reason, this is not injustice, that man has no power over his own acts, and that God causes man to do both good and evil. This is the statement of a modern Muslim.<sup>1</sup> The Mu'tazilites tried to find authority in the Qur'ān but sometimes had to resort to doubtful exegesis as e.g., when they twisted Sura xvi. 9, "It belongs to God to show the path" to mean, "It is the duty of God to show the path", and when they practised *ta'wil* or rationalizing interpretation. That anything should be incumbent on God was an idea utterly anathematized by their opponents, because they thought that to do away with the absolute power of Allah was to destroy the divine theocracy. The Mu'tazilites were just as anxious as the orthodox to maintain the idea of the divine theocracy, but they desired this to be an ethical dominion exercised in justice and righteousness. How the orthodox reacted to these "heresies" may be seen by reference to Bağdādī, "The Qadarites of the Mu'tazila assert that a man determines his own efforts without hindrance from Allah." "Al Jubba'i and Abū Hāshim have said that all power to produce is a thing unlike other things. Thus this is not limited to their Lord." The followers of Hārith b. Mazid al Ibādi are described as holding "that ability precedes every deed, contrary to the Sunnis who believe that Allah creates the deeds of creatures and that ability accompanies the deed" (i.e., is simultaneous with it). Abū Hudhayl's idea that the present world is the sphere of obligation and responsibility, in contrast to the hereafter, where freedom to sin ceases, is sometimes described as a belief that men are free in this life but not free in eternal life because all their motions are determined, necessary, and created by Allah. The thought which lies behind this is that Law involves freedom to obey or disobey or, to put it in another way, it involves responsibility, and there can be no responsibility without freedom. Thus Law is the system for this world and cannot be extended into the next. The limitations of this conception will be obvious, but the emphasis on responsibility and freedom is refreshing. But these are the men who are described as heretics. According to the orthodox Muslim criticism, to assert freedom of action to men was equivalent to claiming that man was a second creator. It is sometimes hard to differentiate

<sup>1</sup> Shibli: 'Ilm ul Kalām, p. 11 f.

between this orthodox opinion and that heretical theory which is supposed to be at the furthest extreme from the Qadarite position, namely, the Jabarite heresy, which holds that a man is absolutely compelled in all his actions. *Bağhdādī* describes Jahm b. Ṣafwān, the chief exponent of the theory, as teaching that man had no power over his acts and that they were all compulsory, being attributed to creatures only metaphorically.<sup>1</sup> The orthodox only escaped this extreme position by the very obscure doctrine of *kasb*, or acquirement, by which man was left with "a modicum of power to acquire acts previously determined for him".

*Kasb* or *iktiṣāb* is the peculiar doctrine of the Ash'arites : "The action of a creature is created, originated, produced by Allah but it is 'acquired' (*maksūb*) by the creature, by which is meant its being brought into connexion with his power and will without there resulting any effect from him in it or any introduction to its existence, only that he is a locus (*maḥall*) for it."<sup>2</sup> Macdonald explains this by saying that "Al Ash'arī wished only to explain our consciousness of freedom to choose and his explanation was that this consciousness is a separate creation by Allah in the mind ; man for him was an automaton with consciousness as part of the machinery".<sup>3</sup> We shall have occasion to deal with this doctrine more fully later. It only serves to emphasize the rigidity with which power was exclusively attributed to God no matter what human consciousness might indicate. We have independent evidence of the early rejection of the doctrine of free will by orthodox Islam in the writings of John of Damascus, who asserts that one of the chief differences between Islam and Christianity is in reference to predestination and freewill.<sup>4</sup>

One of the main points at issue in this early controversy is whether God is a just God. If all human acts are the product of the divine decree, how is it that man is punished for disobedience ? The Shi'ites, following the Mu'tazilites, accept the principle of the divine justice, but the Sunnis have no place for the doctrine since they will not allow any criterion of what justice is except the very act of God. In exposing the heretics *Bağhdādī* mentions that 'Isā b. Ṣabīḥ alleged that God could act tyrannously and lie.<sup>5</sup> This idea is stoutly opposed but from a peculiar point of view. He says that Allah has power over all things subject to power and everything which is subject to His power, if it proceeds from Him, is not tyrannical on His part. This simply means that tyranny cannot be attributed to God because He has the right to exercise His power in what might be regarded from a human point of view as tyrannical but which, since it is the divine prerogative, cannot

<sup>1</sup> *Bağhdādī* : *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. vi.

<sup>2</sup> Jurjani on Ijī's *Mawāqif* quoted by Macdonald, *Encyc. of Islam*, ii. 786.

<sup>3</sup> Macdonald in *loc. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Migne : *Pat. Graeca*, 94, 1589.

<sup>5</sup> *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

be so described. Bağhdâdî also says that Hishām b. 'Amr al Fawâti could not accept Sura xiv. 32,<sup>1</sup> "The wicked He shall cause to err", and that he also rejected the Quranic verses which said that Allah blinds the unbelievers and, "We only prolong their days that they may increase in sins" (Sura iii. 172). This should be compared with the Philonic objection to the idea of God hardening the heart. The idea that what was just might be known independently by reason, and that God could not in justice do what reason considered unjust is behind the ideas attributed to Ibn Karrâm.<sup>2</sup> He held that God cannot take the lives of children who, He knows, would become believers. It is not right to cause an infidel to die when God knows that if his life were spared he would be a believer, unless his death is an act of righteousness, or if God's justice is visited upon him for his infidelity. Bishr b. al Mu'tamir is described by the same writer<sup>3</sup> as holding that if Allah punished a baby He would be acting unjustly. "Our followers<sup>4</sup> say that Allah has power to punish babies ; if He does so His act must be just." Thus justice can only be recognized by the act of God, and there is no criterion of what constitutes justice beside that. Both Mu'tazilites and Shi'ites assert that good is good in itself, and evil is evil in itself, whether the Lawgiver so pronounces it or not. If the Lawgiver denies the evil of what we should call a lie, then we have no ground for trusting that what He says is true. John of Damascus makes a distinction which is important when the question of the divine justice is under consideration. He says, "All that the divine nature wills it can accomplish, but it does not will all it could accomplish. For it could destroy the universe, but it does not will to do so."<sup>5</sup> This should be compared with what is attributed by Bağhdâdî to 'Abdu'l Karîm b. 'Ajarad and to the Khâzimites,<sup>6</sup> "Nothing is done except Allah pleases", "What Allah desires happens ; what He does not desire does not happen and we do not attribute evil to Allah." The will of God is to do justly, and this will controls the divine power. To glorify the power of God at the expense of His goodwill and to relate justice to His power, "the advantage of the more powerful" as Plato says in the Republic, instead of to His goodwill, is to strike at the very foundation of any conception of God as a righteous God.

It is not that the question of the goodwill of God was ignored. That what God did was for the welfare (*salâh*) of creatures was denied. The Mu'tazilites and the Shi'ites held this doctrine, but the Sunnis would have none of it. "They have agreed that the Wise does naught save that which is advantageous and good, and because of His wisdom

<sup>1</sup> *Loc. cit.*<sup>2</sup> *Farg.*, Pt. III, Cap. vii.<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.<sup>4</sup> The Orthodox.<sup>5</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. I, Cap. xiv (P.G. 94, 860 f.).<sup>6</sup> *Farg.*, Pt. III, Cap. ii.

it is incumbent on Him to consider the welfare of the creatures.”<sup>1</sup> The Ash’arites, on the contrary, believed that it is not incumbent on Allah to do what is for His creatures’ welfare. Indeed, it is shocking to them that anything should be incumbent on Allah at all.<sup>2</sup> The debate can be illustrated from what Baghdādī says about Nazzām. This heretic held that “God has no power to do to His creatures what is not for their good”. This was slightly modified by the Iskāfites who said that God had power to force or act tyrannously towards only those who have no intelligence.<sup>3</sup> Nazzām said that Allah could not take away sight, nor cause disease to healthy people, nor make a rich person poor, if sight, health and wealth were for the good of the person concerned. Similarly if disease and poverty were good for some person, Allah could not give him health and wealth. Allah could not create the scorpion or the snake, if the creation of something else instead would have been better. To say “could not” of Allah was considered to be going too far even by some of the Basrites, according to Baghdādī, who cavilled at the notion that inability could be predicated of Allah. But they, too, held firmly that God must act for the good of His creatures. They insisted that all God’s acts are founded on benevolence and that every tiniest atom exhibits His wisdom. In opposition to the Ash’arites they also held that God never imposes a burden on anyone which that person is unable to sustain. There can be no doubt that the conception that God acts with goodwill was related to similar ideas in Christianity. In this connexion it is interesting to see what John of Damascus writes about Providence.<sup>4</sup> “The works of God are partly according to the goodwill of God and partly according to permission. Works of goodwill comprise all those which are undeniably good, while works of permission are concessions. For providence often permits the righteous man to encounter misfortune in order that he may reveal to others the virtue that lies concealed within him, as was the case with Job. At other times it allows something strange to be done in order that something great and marvellous may be accomplished . . . as when the salvation of men was brought about by the Cross . . . Man is allowed to fall at times into some act of baseness in order that another worse fault may be thus corrected. . . . Further, it is to be noted that the choice of what is to be done is in our own hands, but the final issue depends in the one case, when our actions are good, on the co-operation of God, who in His justice brings help according to His foreknowledge to such as choose the good . . . and in the other case when our actions are evil, on the desertion of God who again in His justice stands aloof in accordance with His foreknowledge. Of

<sup>1</sup> Shahristānī : *Milal* (Cureton), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Creed of an Nasafi in Macdonald : *Development*, p. 300.

<sup>3</sup> *Fard*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>4</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. II, Cap. xxix (*P.G.*, 94, 965).

actions that are in our hands, the good ones depend on His antecedent goodwill and pleasure, while the wicked ones depend neither on His antecedent nor on His consequent will, but are concession to freewill. For that which is the result of compulsion has neither reason nor virtue in it." The idea of "desertion" or "standing aloof" we shall meet later in Muslim theology as *khidhlān*.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the general question of the relation of the acts of creatures to the power or act of God, there was early a manifest tendency to ascribed all acts to God, since, as we have said, it was held that if a man had *qadar*, as the Qadarites claimed, this would mean that man was a sort of second creator or at least an author (*mi'jād*). How this was expressed shortly after the period with which we are concerned may be seen in the words of Al Ghazzālī,<sup>2</sup> "We testify that He is Willer of the things that are, a Director of the things that happen; there happens nothing in the world, seen or unseen, little or much, small or great, good or evil, advantage or disadvantage, faith or unbelief, knowledge or ignorance, success or loss, increase or diminution, obedience or rebellion, except by His will. What He wills is, and what He wills not is not. Not a glance of one who looks, or a slip of one who thinks is outside of His will; He is the Creator, the Bringer back, the Doer of that which He wills." The opinions advanced on the subject were very varied. Some said that human acts needed no creator. This was implicit in what Mu'ammar said, that accidents were not God's creation and actions which were begotten or generated (*mutawallad*) in the second place had no creator at all. This seems to imply that such actions as occur by second causes, as we should say, are accidental, and there is a suggestion of the deism which holds that God sets going the creation, and then ceases to act upon it. This is the very opposite of the idea of continuous creation which before long was to seize hold of the minds of the Islamic thinkers, and the roots of which are appearing in this period. Mu'ammar held that God's power extends only over the created objects which are brought forth in His essence, such as His will, His utterance, His perceptions, and the like, but created objects in the world are not at all the objects of His power. Baghdādī says that the orthodox view is that every created thing is, before its actual production, an object of God's power. Mu'ammar said that this did not apply to accidents. Some said that the fact was that God had no power over the things which were the objects of power to others. Thus Al Ka'bī denied that Allah created the deeds of creatures.<sup>3</sup> It has been pointed out that some Mu'tazilites denied that God was the creator of the world in the ordinary sense of the word.

<sup>1</sup> For the goodwill of God in His acts see also what has been said in the previous section on the Grace of God, p. 62 ff., and also Wensinck: *Muslim Creed*, p. 62 f.

<sup>2</sup> Macdonald: *Development*, p. 302.

<sup>3</sup> *Farg*, III, iii.

Nazzām teaches that God thinks and so the world comes to be. No act of will is required. But generally, in all but the Mu'tazilite and kindred schools, the term creation (*khalq*) is completely denied to apply to human acts. The Jahmites went so far as to say that all things which were brought forth are objects of God's power and there is no agent of power other than He. The Najjārites held the orthodox position that God is the creator of the acquired acts of men.

With reference to *tawallud*, by which is meant the consequences of acts, there were also various opinions. The correct solution according to Baghdādī was that Allah creates one thing from another. Thus the consequences of a man throwing a stone may be that someone is hurt. Is the man who throws the stone responsible for the hurt? Muhammad b. 'Isā<sup>1</sup> said that the consequences of acts or "generated effects" are necessarily God's acts, since God formed the stone so that it had to fly when it was thrown, and He also bestowed on animals a nature by which it was bound to suffer pain when it was hurt. One question which was put was whether God was the agent in human birth and there was hair splitting about a birth which resulted from adultery.<sup>2</sup> These questions could hardly arise when there was a proper view of man's freedom and the constitution (*nizām*) of the world. The Shi'ites recognize this. If God has placed inherent characteristics within things whereby secondary results come to be, then secondary causes can be accepted. It was the strange reluctance to admit that there could be any secondary causes at all which prompted some of the futile questions. It is interesting to notice that John of Damascus insists that whatever intermediary causes there may be, "All things must be referred to God. For our birth is to be referred to His creative power; and our continuance in being to His conserving power; and our government and safety to His providence; and the eternal enjoyment of good things by those who preserve the law of nature in which we are formed is to be ascribed to His goodness."<sup>3</sup> Here is introduced the idea of co-operation "by those who preserve the law of nature wherein we are formed". The same sort of idea is attributed to 'Isā b. Sabīl<sup>4</sup> though not expressed in the same way.

He said that a deed might be the result of the work of two agents, the result being produced by a sort of generation. Thumāma ventured the opinion that generated acts are without an author. Baghdādī says to this, "If it is true that one act exists without a doer, it is possible that every act may so exist . . . so creation would not prove a creator." But the line which Thumāma took with regard to the consequences of acts, as for instance the turning of a key in a lock,

<sup>1</sup> *Farg*, III, v.

<sup>2</sup> Was Jerome the originator of this? *Vide Ad Pamm.* 22.

<sup>3</sup> *De Fide Orth.*, Bk. II, Cap. xxviii (P.G., 94, 961).

<sup>4</sup> *Farg*, III, iii.

was that such could not be regarded as either by man or by God, for in this way God would be the author of sin and would also be dependent on the will of the creature. And so he preferred to think that these secondary results were really authorless, but could be regarded as the results of nature. For instance, we cannot help seeing what is presented to our sight. And we do not create our knowledge of the thing which is an object of knowledge. It is of the nature of the eye to see, and of the nature of an intelligent being to know, but it is God who creates the nature of the thing so that it should be seen and known, or see and know. He held that there was thus a kind of physical necessity and that the will alone was free. This was to allow for moral choice, and he contemplated a sphere of determination where God Himself was not free. Without actually reaching it, this comes close to the Christian idea of God's self-determination or limitation of Himself. The Ash'arites' view was that all effects were *seriatim* by God's choice, whereas the true view would seem to be that God's choice results in effects by inherent laws of nature, in accord with an order which He Himself has fixed.

One or two peculiar theories call for very brief notice. *Baghdādī* ascribed to *Abū Hudhayl* the idea that the preordination of Allah can cease and in proof of this he is said to have instanced the passing away of Paradise and Hell, or at least the passing away of the bliss and torment of the hereafter. Another peculiar theory of the extreme Shi'ites is that called *bādā'*, "the intervention of new circumstances which bring about the alteration of an earlier divine determination". The idea provides for change in God's knowledge according to the change of circumstances and also for a change in a fixed resolution.<sup>1</sup> The relation of God's knowledge and will to the temporal has always been a difficult problem, and it cannot be said that the theory of *bādā'* contributes much to the solution of it. The theory arose out of some special circumstances in which an early Shi'ite leader named *Mukhtār* claimed that he had a divine revelation of a victory over his opponent *Mus'ab b. uz Zubayr*. Actually he was defeated. Whereupon he referred to Sura xiii. 39 and said that "something intervened", meaning that it had been God's will that he should win, but that something had happened to make God change His mind.

### (III) NON-MUSLIM DOCTRINE

If we refer to the works of writers such as *Ibn Miskawaih*, it becomes clear that, though these called themselves Muslims and felt that they were right in so doing, their doctrine diverged very considerably from the Quranic doctrine and its orthodox development which we have just reviewed. Theirs was a philosophical doctrine, and apart from the philosophers this doctrine appears most in the Mu'tazilite school,

<sup>1</sup> See article by Goldziher in *Encycl. of Islam*, Vol. 1, 550 ff.

but later when the scholastic or dialectical theology came to be accepted by more orthodox exponents of Islam, we find more philosophical elements accepted, in the attempt to form a view of the ordering of the universe. Here we content ourselves with illustrations from the pre-Islamic doctrine which we consider to be of special interest for a comparative study. Other points will come to our notice when the cosmology is under consideration in the next section.

Both Stoicism and Platonism emphasized the providential view of the world. The two great religions, quite apart from the Greek philosophy which they came to use, strongly maintained the same belief. Neoplatonism was equally sure and its various exponents, while expressing themselves in various ways, saw the order of the whole cosmos as manifesting in different degrees the Divine Intelligence. In the school of Alexandria, generally speaking, there was an optimistic view of the world. The same optimism appears to some extent in the Mu'tazilites, when they speak of all things being for the good of the creature, and in their naïve remarks about scorpions and snakes. Divine foresight was immediately apparent to the Alexandrian school. The emphasis here was on the divine wisdom rather than on mere power.<sup>1</sup> We have seen in the previous section how the Mu'tazilite thinkers carried the thought of the divine wisdom into relation with the welfare of creatures. The same notion of the divine wisdom is seen in the pages of Ibn Miskawaih. The problem of evil obtruded itself on this happy optimism and one of the questions which Celsus thrusts at Origen is, that if there is a providence such as the Christians held, why did it not amend this evil? Moreover, how could directive providence be reconciled with man's freedom? Sometimes the idea was expressed that evil was not evil to the good. It will be remembered that there is a suggestion in one of the heretical Muslim opinions just quoted that poverty and ill-health may be for the good of the creature. And in the quotation from John of Damascus we find that even a fall into some baseness could not be regarded as unmitigated evil, "God allows a man who takes a pride in his virtue and righteousness to fall away into fornication, in order that he may be brought through this fall into the perception of his own weakness, and be humbled, and make confession to the Lord", and "the sufferer may resolutely welcome suffering in the hope of future glory and the desire for future blessings, as in the case of the martyrs".<sup>2</sup> Sometimes, as in Origen and Plotinus, we find the idea that our misery is due to some action in a previous state of existence. More frequently the source of evil is wrong choice, and this points to human freedom. Even pre-mundane experience which has entailed evil consequences here is due to this wrong choice or "rebellious activity"

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Origen's *πρόνοια σχέσιος αἰσθητή*.

<sup>2</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. II, Cap. xxix (P.G., 94, 965).

We may even see in Philo premonitions of the later theory that God is the author of all acts. According to him "doing" is proper to God, while "passivity" is the property of creatures.<sup>1</sup> This was to take another turn when the Deity came to be described as "Pure Act". The implication in Philo is that man has no power of origination (cf. the denial of *khalq* to man or the refusal to regard him as an author, i.e., *mū'jid*). Man can only choose between already existing alternatives. Man, says Philo, though he knows the difference between good and evil often chooses the latter. He is unique among the creatures for this very fact.<sup>2</sup> Philo insists that God's command imposes no compulsion upon man in order that man may freely follow what is good.<sup>3</sup> The fundamental endowments of man whereby he exercises freedom and moves himself are from God. He owes to God his actual being, his birth, his growth, his power of assimilation of nutrition, his senses, his speech, and all his physical powers.<sup>4</sup> Even mind in itself is not a "cause", but God who precedes the mind acts causally through it.<sup>5</sup>

Though there remains in the Alexandrian school something of the Platonist theory that matter by its intractability is the principle of evil, the dualism that this implies was not congenial to the Jewish and Christian theologians, and the notion of wrong choice and the freedom of the will in this respect as the best explanation of sin became predominatingly the mark of this school. The scriptural basis for this was in the story in Genesis. It did not follow, however, that the school accepted the idea of original sin. For instance, Clement did not agree with this doctrine. His idea was that Adam was created perfect, but that for a man to be really virtuous positive obedience was required. It is the absence of positive virtue which constitutes sin. Man was not left to initiate this obedience by an act of will without any help. Both Origen and Clement hold that the grace of God is required. It precedes, accompanies, and sustains man's act, but does not compel it. When it is said that God works both to will and to do, Origen would interpret it to mean that it is by the grace of God that man is possessed of the power of freewill and not that in every individual act of will there is the divine determination. The Muslim doctrine, according to the orthodox, is that every single act of will is determined by God, and there have been extreme predestinarians in Christianity who have held the same view. Origen admitted neither election nor reprobation. His exposition of the text "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate" was that God knows what He predestines and He always predestines good, that when God calls men He does so

<sup>1</sup> τὸ ποῖειν contrasted with τὸ πάσχειν Cherub. 24 (i. 153).

<sup>2</sup> Conf. Ling., 35 (i. 432).

<sup>3</sup> Quod det. pot. ins. 4 (i. 193).

<sup>4</sup> Plantat. Noe 7 (i. 334).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Leg. All., 13 (i. 74-75).

according to *their own* purpose. There is no previous purpose of God which may in some cases be to salvation and in others to damnation. If it is insisted that men are called according to the purpose of God then it must be a purpose which proceeds from His foreknowledge of what man will purpose. Origen is also troubled about the text, "Whom He will He hardeneth." Here also he seeks an explanation which will be in accord with human responsibility. Sunlight causes wax to melt and clay to harden. The same operation has different results because of the difference in nature. Divine mercy may melt or harden. Another explanation was adopted later in Islam, namely, the divine withdrawal (cf. *Khīdhlān*). Origen's explanation was in part similar to that of Irenaeus, who maintained that Pharaoh was hardened as a result of his own character.

In Tertullian's view human freedom was explained as necessitated through man's creation in the image of God, and this was acceptable to the majority of the Christian theologians. But human freedom was not considered inconsistent with immutable divine decrees. For instance in Clement of Rome<sup>1</sup> we find, "The heavens moving at His appointment are subject to Him in peace; day and night pursue the course allotted by Him without interfering with one another. Sun and moon and the assemblies of the stars roll on in harmony according to His decree in their appointed courses, not deviating in the least from them. . . . The earth sends forth food in overflowing abundance for men, for beast and for all things living in it, without dispute and without changing any of His decrees. . . . The gulf of the boundless ocean is gathered by His operation into its appointed places and does not exceed the limits which bound it. . . . All these things did the Creator and Master of the universe ordain to be in peace and harmony and to all things He does good." This is an important passage, for here are mentioned "appointment", "allotment", "directive control", "ordination" of all things according to the will of the Creator and immutable "decrees". This is sufficient to remind us that in the language of worship such expressions are fitting and when such passages occur in the Qur'ān, *in themselves* they need not be pressed to such an extreme as to imply the utter disability of man. There, too, they might have been simply the language of worship. If the doctrine of human freedom is affirmed it is not because the divine power is not extolled, for the Christian extols the power and ordination of God but does not regard it as negating all power to man. It should also be remarked that the Christian writer accepts all such operations as flowing from the Divine Goodness rather than from absolute power.

It should also be pointed out here that Christianity has been able to accept a doctrine of predestination which is not inconsistent with human freedom. Augustine has sometimes been, with reason, repre-

<sup>1</sup> First Epistle, xx.

sented as a teacher of predestination. But no one taught human freedom with more clarity. Christianity to him is "the universal way of the soul's freedom".<sup>1</sup> In his *City of God*,<sup>2</sup> he has a chapter on "God's foreknowledge and man's freedom of choice; against the opinion of Cicero", in which he says, "Howsoever the philosophers wind themselves in webs of disputation, we, as we confess the great and true God, so do we acknowledge His high will, power and foreknowledge: nor let us fear that we do not perform all our actions by our own will, because He, whose foreknowledge cannot err, knew before that we should do thus or thus." Tully "of the two (alternatives) makes choice of freedom of election: and to confirm it denies the foreknowledge utterly. . . . If there be any freedom of the will, all things do not follow destiny: if all things follow not destiny, then is there no set order in the causes of things. . . . If there be not a set order of all things in God's foreknowledge then all things fall not out according to the said knowledge" . . . "But it does not follow that nothing should be left free to our will because God knows the certain and set order of all events. For our very wills are in that order of causes, which God knows so surely and hath in His prescience; human wills, being the cause of human actions: so that He that keeps a knowledge of the causes of all things, cannot leave men's wills out of that knowledge, knowing them to be the causes of their actions . . . because He foreknew that men should have this power, and do these acts. . . . Wherefore if I list to use the word fate in anything, I would rather say that it belonged to the weaker, and that will belonged to the higher, who has the other in His power, rather than grant that our liberty of will were taken away by that set order."<sup>3</sup>

The line which John of Damascus takes is lightly different. "We ought to understand that while God knows all things beforehand He does not predetermine all things. For He knows beforehand those things that are in our power, but He does not predetermine them. . . . Virtue is a gift of God implanted in our nature and He Himself is the source and cause of all good, and without His co-operation and help we cannot will or do any good thing. But we have it in our power either to abide in virtue and follow God who calls us into the ways of virtue, or to stray and follow the devil who summons us but cannot compel us. For wickedness is nothing else but the withdrawal of goodness, just as darkness is nothing else but the privation of light."<sup>3</sup>

The refusal to put undue stress on human liberty at the expense of the Divine Sovereignty is seen in the rejection of Pelagianism. The Church in general was prepared to accept the idea that human liberty was impaired and needed to be restored by grace. Man had been

<sup>1</sup> *City of God*, i. 309 (trans. by J. H.), 1610.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 154 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. II, xxx. (P.G., 94, 969 f.).

corrupted by the fall and for his salvation there was need of God's help through Christ by the Holy Spirit. As represented by Julian of Eclanum, Pelagianism held to the justice of God, that all He does is good, that the knowledge of good and evil was obtained by reason, that every man starts, as it were, *de novo*, that his environment and not his heredity is the determining factor in his moral condition, that inherited sin or guilt is an impossible idea, that ability limits obligation and that this ability is a matter of natural endowment and alone can be referred to God. Where Pelagianism parted company from the orthodox position was in considering that man's freedom of will was such that he became independent of God and could, without the previous impulse and empowerment of grace, initiate a movement to righteousness which would make it almost incumbent upon God to afford grace and power, as a sort of reward. Pelagius influenced the school of Antioch and the Nestorians as we have already seen, and that school put great emphasis on the freedom of man. Theodore of Mopsuestia tended to make God's purpose dependent on man's free-will. In one respect, however, he makes a contribution to the elucidation of the reconciliation of the doctrine of human freedom with the effective working of the Holy Spirit within man. This, he thought, consisted in love. Because the relationship of the believer to God was one of love there was no compulsion or constraint but a free communion.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the Damascene introduces Aristotelian ethical theory into his explanation of the reason why we are endowed with freewill. "Reason consists of a speculative and a practical part. The speculative part is the contemplation of the nature of things, and the practical consists in deliberation and defines right reason for that which is done. The speculative part is called mind or intellect and the practical side is called prudence. Everyone therefore who deliberates does so in the belief that the choice of what is to be done lies in his hands so that he may choose what seems best. . . . If this is so then freewill must necessarily be most closely related to reason. Man, being rational, leads nature rather than nature leads him and so when he desires anything he has the power to check his appetite or indulge it as he likes."<sup>2</sup> He also emphasizes the goodness of God. "Just as light springs from the sun so does good from God."<sup>3</sup> He thus rejects any idea of the arbitrary will of God. Punishment of sinners is because He is just.

We might sum up by saying in the words of Tor Andræ, "No one can call Allah to account for His actions. Another peculiar aspect of the irrational nature of the Divine Will is that Allah often makes

<sup>1</sup> See *De Incarnat.* Migne, Pat. Graec., 66, 977.

<sup>2</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. II, Cap. xxvii (P.G., 94, 960).

<sup>3</sup> *Contra Manichaeos*, xxxviii.

offensive or misleading statements in order to prove men or even to stir up unbelievers to contradict the revealed word (Suras lxxiv. 30; xvii. 42).<sup>1</sup> Islam thus never escapes from an exaggeration of the power of God which leads it to a conception of arbitrary will. *Bağhdādī* records that Al Ash'arī in his reply to Al Jubba'i made the extraordinary statement, "He who binds his oath to the will of Allah does not violate it if he does not keep his oath."<sup>2</sup> What can this indicate but that God is free in an amoral and non-rational sense? No doubt a great problem is involved when it is sought to reconcile the conception of God's Sovereignty and matchless power with His moral government of free beings. The problem may never be solved, but any doctrine should preserve the justice and wisdom of God, and the responsibility of man. Even if Christianity has not settled the problem and must alternatively think of the Divine Lordship and the freedom of man, so that Calvinists preach like Methodists and Methodists pray like Calvinists, nevertheless there is a healthy tension in Christian thought, which in Islam has long since ceased, the equilibrium lost and overbalanced in favour of an unrelieved determinism. Perhaps all that is needed in Islam is that there should be a restoration of this tension, but it still remains true that the overbalancing is not in interpretation but has its chief cause in the standards which Muslims accept as authoritative.

#### F. THE WORLD AND MAN

##### (i) COSMOLOGY AND THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE

Most of the things which can be said under this heading have been referred to in other connexions in the course of this book.<sup>3</sup> Some of these we will briefly recapitulate. In Islam God is the sole Creator of the universe, heaven and earth and all that dwells therein. The things in the world are created for man (Suras ii. 27 and xvi. 5). The transitory nature of the world is greatly stressed and the contrast between the created and the Creator unduly emphasized, in spite of a few passages which indicate an approach to the Christian point of view, as e.g., that God breathed of His Spirit into man (Sura xv. 29 f.). The wonders of the upper world are described in crude detail by the traditions. There is the throne borne by the angels on which Allah is seated. The various heavens have their special inhabitants. The topography of heaven is fixed by stories of the ascent of Muhammad and his traversing the whole of the seven. The first is of silver and is the abode of Adam; the second of gold wherein John the Baptist and Jesus dwell; the third is of pearls and is the home of Joseph; the

<sup>1</sup> Tor Andréæ: *Muhammad*, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. iii.

<sup>3</sup> See under Quranic Doctrine of God, and the sections dealing with Emanation, pp. 14 ff., 79 ff. etc., *supra*. See also the translation of *Al Fawz ul Aeghar*, Vol. I, pp. 132 ff.

fourth of platinum and therein Idris was found; the fifth, also of silver, is Aaron's abode; the sixth of rubies and garnets is where Moses dwells; the seventh is the heaven of Abraham. Sometimes Jesus is found in the fourth heaven and not the second. Asin y Palacios has a great deal of information on these strange matters in his study of the relations of the *Divine Comedy* to Muslim ideas.<sup>1</sup> The heavens are also made to correspond with the planets as will be seen in Ibn Miskawaih. An example of the sort of thing one meets with in traditions on the subject is "Verily there will be in paradise a tent for the believer made of one hollow pearl the length of which will be sixty miles". Similar instructive details are given about Hell. "It is related from 'Utba bin Ghazwān that he said, 'It was related to us that a stone was cast from the edge of Hell and it fell into it for seventy years and did not reach the bottom . . . and it was related to us that what is between the two halves of the doors of paradise is a journey of forty years.'"<sup>2</sup>

The earth was considered to be central and the moon next to it. Beyond are Venus and Mercury, the Sun, Jupiter, Mars and Saturn. The moon was the boundary between the temporal and the eternal worlds. This is simply a repetition of what every Alexandrian thought and is based on the Ptolemaic system. As we have seen in Ibn Miskawaih, where even the advent of a prophet is said to be controlled by the conjunction of stars, the stars were considered to have a peculiar influence on the nether world and on men. Origen could think of the heavens as a scroll on which was written all that awaited fulfilment. To Plotinus the heavenly bodies were a mystic writing. The Damascene could write, "They say that there are seven zones of the heaven, one higher than the other. And its nature, they say, is of extreme rarity like that of smoke and each zone contains one of the planets."<sup>3</sup> Some writers could still play with the idea that the heavenly luminaries had souls, though the Damascene shows that at his time there was scepticism about it, and he declares them to be "inanimate and insensible".<sup>4</sup>

In spite of the puerility of some of these things, it must be recognized that it was felt that a religion must have a cosmological setting. Later on religion was thought to need a completely developed ontology and cosmology as the prolegomena to its theology. The beginnings of such ideas were in the *Timaeus* of Plato and they were carried on into the various schools in Alexandria and elsewhere. We have already indicated that one of the important matters at issue between philosophizing theologians and their opponents was whether the universe

<sup>1</sup> *Islam and the Divine Comedy, passim.*

<sup>2</sup> *Mishkāt*, Cap. XXV on Seditions.

<sup>3</sup> *De Fide Orth.*, Bk. II, Cap. vi (*P.G.*, 94, 881).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

was eternal or had been created *ex nihilo*. It is hard to know whether some of the pre-Islamic theologians believed in creation *ex nihilo* or not. Philo is most obscure on the subject. Origen is plainly for creation *ex nihilo* but talks of eternal creation and Photius charged Clement with teaching that matter is eternal. With regard to Time, most of the early Muslim theologians have nothing to say about it. Ibn Sinā holds that Time comes to be with Creation. This simply repeats the Alexandrine conception. Though some, like Plotinus, did hold that matter was not created in time at all, and that the universe was eternal. Baghdādī rather inadequately calls those who believed in the eternity of the universe materialists (*dahrīya*).

Turning to the world below, the orthodox Muslim opinion is that it is stationary and "not rushing downward through space", because if this were so a stone when thrown, being lighter than the earth and consequently falling more slowly than it, would never be able to fall to the ground. Some heretics maintained that the heavens were infinite except for their limitation in a downward direction by the mundane plane, and that the earth was infinite in all directions save the upward direction. This the orthodox utterly rejected partly because the infinity of the heaven in the upward direction would make it impossible to provide a place for the Throne above the heavens. The idea that the heavens were concentric spheres with the earth as centre and with the spheres nearest to the earth encompassed by the spheres further away—which we have seen was the belief of Ibn Miskawīah—was rejected by the orthodox. They held that the heavens were superimposed in storeys.

To use terms like "primary matter" (*hayūlā*) was utterly abhorrent to the orthodox of this early period. They were, however, sufficiently affected by Aristotelian ideas to admit that all created things could be distinguished as substance and accident. Every substance was conceived to consist of an indivisible atom and all such were alike. They were only differentiated by accidents which were created in them. Anyone who considered that the atom was divisible was regarded as heretical. The four elements were accepted but not the fifth (ether?). Some of the early philosophizing theologians had devised the theory of *zuhūr* and *kumūn*, i.e., disclosure and concealment, to account for the advent of different accidents in bodies, as e.g., motion and rest at different times. This theory was rejected and the orthodox stated that accidents could not be considered to be concealed in bodies until they became apparent and ceased, as it were, to be quiescent. Accidents were in bodies by continual successive creation. They had no separate existence apart from the supposita in which they were created. They were applied to substance and did not inhere in substance. In other words they had nothing to do with the "nature" of the substance to which they advanced and could not, therefore, be

qualities. Nevertheless, bodies did not exist without attributes. Mu'ammar was a heretic because he held, apparently, that there was nature in things. He held that when a body acts according to its nature phenomena appear. Sound, he taught, is the act of a body which is sonorous by nature. He also held that the non-existence of a thing was due to something in its nature. Thus he did not relate the act of creation to "accidents". In general, those who accepted the theory of disclosure and concealment denied that phenomena were the object of separate creation. They believed that innumerable phenomena were concealed or inherent in bodies. When one accident appeared in a body its contrary was "masked". Thus when a body was in motion, motion appeared and rest was "masked" and *vice versa*. The difficulty was to account for the succession of disclosure and concealment. If it were of the nature of a body to move, whence could its rest come? It would seem that there is to some extent a continuation of the ancient theory that all is in flux, as expounded by the followers of Heraclitus. Generally speaking, both the idea of flux and the idea that there was inherent nature in things were rejected by the orthodox in favour of continuous creation of accidents. More complete discussion of these matters will be necessary when the scholastic theology falls to be treated.<sup>1</sup>

## (II) MAN

For any properly formulated doctrine of Man in Islam, we are completely at a loss in this early period. Indeed Muslim theology never seems to have realized the necessity for such a doctrine, and such theological ideas as we can find have to be gleaned from many sources and by inference from other doctrines. This will have been gathered from some of the previous sections in our present study. We have had occasion to mention the utter otherness of God as contrasted with man in the discussion of the doctrine of the divine transcendence,<sup>2</sup> the conceptions of anthropomorphism and theomorphism,<sup>3</sup> and in reference to the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation.<sup>4</sup> The question of the freedom of man inevitably arose when the questions of predestination and the relation of God's acts to the acts of man were dealt with.<sup>5</sup> The theory of prophethood, when it is expounded in the manner of Ibn Miskawaih,<sup>6</sup> has also special implications for any doctrine of common humanity. Nevertheless, for convenience it is necessary to recapitulate, but this will be done without undue prolixity.

<sup>1</sup> Reference should be made to *Al Farg bain al Firaq*, Pt. V, Cap. iii for more details about these matters.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, pp. 24 ff. and 38 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, pp. 27 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Supra*, pp. 98 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Supra*, pp. 67 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. I, pp. 163 ff.

Man is not "a little lower than the angels" in the Quranic conception, but superior to them<sup>1</sup> and "the Lord of Creation" (*Ashraf ul Makhluqāt*), "And if thou shouldst ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will surely say, 'The mighty, the knowing One created them', who made for you the earth a couch, and placed for you roads therein, haply, ye may be guided: and who sent down from the heaven water in due measure; and we raised up thereby a dead country; thus shall ye too be brought forth; and who has created all species; and has made for you the ships and the cattle whereon to ride, that ye may settle yourselves on their backs; then remember the favour of your Lord when ye settled thereon, and say, 'Celebrated be the praises of Him who hath subjected this to us! We could not have got this ourselves'" (Sura xlvi. 8-12). Adam as representative man is God's vicar on earth,<sup>2</sup> and all men are referred to as such in Sura vi. 165.

God's creative power is at work in all the stages of man's existence from an extract of clay, through the embryonic stage, to birth and the inbreathing of God's spirit so that he becomes a living soul (Sura xxiii. 12-15). In the passage referred to "another creation" is mentioned. This seems to point to a clear distinction between the bodily nature of man and his spiritual nature. In accord with this, man is a religious being, and this is his "very constitution in which God has constituted him" (Sura xxx. 29). The term used is *fīṭra*. This is variously interpreted, and it has almost come to mean in Muslim dogmatics "original righteousness". For Traditions on this subject Wensinck should be consulted.<sup>3</sup> One such is, "Every child is born according to the *fīṭra*; then his parents make him a Jew, or a Christian, or a Magian." The natural implication of this is that every child is born a Muslim, but others say that it only means that a child is born sound and with normal capacity for religion. Others say that it means that "natural" religion is equivalent to Islam and without the interference of antagonistic forces, man would naturally develop into the religion which is perfected in Islam. The tradition, because it ascribes particular powers to parents, has sometimes been felt to be an embarrassment to those who deny the possibility of second causes interfering with the decrees of God. The Qur'an also teaches that man has within himself the "signs" (*āyāt*) of Allah (Sura xli. 53). These signs may be found in "far horizons" and also within man. Another passage is important, "We have indeed created man in the best of symmetry (*fi ahsani taqwīmin*). Then we will send him back the lowest of the low; save those who believe and do right."<sup>4</sup> The former of these verses is

<sup>1</sup> Suras xv. 26 ff.; vii. 10; xvii. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Sura ii. 28 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Muslim Creed*, pp. 42 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Sura xv. 4-5.

sometimes interpreted to mean that there is no such thing as original sin, but the latter leaves this ambiguous. It might mean that man was created in the image of God but that he had fallen very low. This is not without support in Muslim writers. For instance Jalāl ud Dīn Rūmī says, "The beauty personified in Adam to which the angels bow down is afterwards deposed like Adam. . . . O God, I wonder what fault did that orchard commit, that these robes should be stripped from it."<sup>1</sup> These statements occur in passages which are avowedly in exposition of the Quranic statement.

Another passage which is important and which is used by those *unorthodox* persons in Islam who believe in freewill is Sura xxxiii. 72 ff., "Verily we offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and shrank from it; but man took it upon him: verily, he is ever unjust and ignorant." Jalāl ud Dīn Rūmī implies in the course of his exposition of these verses that the trust which man so rashly undertook was the freedom of choice, "Deliver me from this pillory of freewill, O gracious and longsuffering Lord! The one-way pull on the 'straight path' is better than the two ways of perplexity,"<sup>2</sup> and in another place he relates the exercise of freewill to the eating of the fruit in Eden, "For a morsel's sake a Luqman has been put in pawn."<sup>3</sup> God is obliquely referred to as the one who fashioned the soul and taught it its sin and piety in Sura xci. 7 f., and this cryptic verse is explained by Zamakhsharī and Baidāwī, the renowned commentators, as the bestowal of the power to distinguish between the two, and the power of choice. In some passages there seems to be a hint of pre-existence, and the day of Alast has passed into the stock of common ideas in Islam. The passage is Sura vii. 171. Alast is the primeval covenant of the pre-existing souls with God. The verse is amplified in a tradition. "Umar b. al Khattāb was asked about this verse, 'And when thy Lord took from the children of Adam their descendants out of their backs'. 'Umar said, 'I heard the Apostle of Allah questioned about this verse and he answered, "Verily, God created Adam and then stroked his back with His right hand and brought out from it certain descendants and said, 'I have created these for paradise, and they will do the deeds of the people of Paradise'. Then He stroked Adam's back with His left hand and brought out descendants and said 'These I have created for the fire, and they will do the deeds of the people of Hell.''"<sup>4</sup> This is not a very good exposition of the words because the Qur'ān does not say that God took these descendants of his from Adam but from the Children of Adam. The verse is obscure or the question as to its meaning is unlikely to have been recorded in *Hadīth*. There is another obscure

<sup>1</sup> *Mathnawī*, v. 962 and 979 (Nicholson's ed.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vi. 203-4 (Nicholson's ed.).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 1960 (Nicholson's ed.).

passage in Sura iv. 1, " O ye folk, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul." This may simply mean descent from one individual, or it may mean that "the human spirit is one essence",<sup>1</sup> as the Sufis are fond of saying. Both this and the previously quoted text about the day of Alast have been interpreted by mystics in a Neoplatonist sense, the "one soul" being the "All-soul" and the "Sons of Adam" being the pre-existing individuations of the All-soul or all the souls. However these passages are to be interpreted, it is highly improbable that they are Neoplatonist.

As to the powers of man, while it is difficult to reconcile it with the prevailing predestinarianism of the Qur'an, there are passages which plainly teach man's responsibility.<sup>2</sup> It is also interesting to find that there are Quranic passages which conflict with the dogmatic refusal to attribute creation to man, e.g., in Sura xxix. 15 *khalqa* is used with man as the subject<sup>3</sup> and in the claim of Jesus to create birds of clay (Sura iii. 43) the same verb is used.

The usual explanation of the story of the temptation of Adam<sup>4</sup> is that Adam really did not wilfully sin, but was deceived by Satan and was immediately pardoned. Thus there can be no thought that Adam's fault involved his descendants. This echoes the Antiochene school of Christian theology. There it was maintained that it was the individual's sin and not Adam's which brought him to mortality. Man was created weak<sup>5</sup> rather than sinful in the Muslim conception. This, too, is very similar to the Antiochene school where the central thought seems to have been that man's very mortality and finitude were responsible for his weakness and passion. Representative ideas on the original state of man are : Philo's belief that man was created perfect, Clement's that though he was not created perfect he was created with the capacity to reach perfection, and Origen's that he was created perfect but by an abuse of freewill fell from his original perfection. Philo is most explicit.<sup>6</sup> Man's form was perfect, which reminds us of the words of Sura xciv. 4, and he was made of the purest materials ; he was also the vicegerent of God (*υπαρχος* cf. Quranic *Khalifa*). There is a certain detachment of Adam from his descendants, since he was created by God and we are born of men. This has already been noted in the Islamic refusal to attribute a sin to Adam which would leave an entail to those who followed. Philo's and Origen's views do not differ very much.

<sup>1</sup> Jalāl ud Dīn Rūmī : *Matiqāwī*, ii. 188 (Nicholson's ed.). See also Sura xxxix. 8, "He created you from one soul ; then He made from it its mate." The obvious meaning of this is that *nafs* is used in the sense of individual, the making of the mate referring to the creation of Eve from Adam.

<sup>2</sup> Suras iii. 146; xi. 18; iii. 139; xvii. 19–20, and xlvi. 19, where the alternatives are set before men, for their choice.

<sup>3</sup> See also Sura lxxxix. 5–7.

<sup>4</sup> See Suras ii. 33–37 and vii. 18–24.

<sup>5</sup> Sura iv. 32, etc.

<sup>6</sup> *Mundi Op.*, 47–53 (i. 32 ff.).

Philo held that generic man was created first and the species was formed of clay.<sup>1</sup> There is a hint of this in the heretical teacher Mu'ammar in the early days of Islam. Mu'ammar asserted that man is something different from this body, a living, knowing, powerful and autonomous being. He considered that it could not be said of the essential man that he moved or that he was at rest or was coloured or sees or touches or is subject to conditions of space. One place did not contain him any more than another. Baghdādī says that if asked whether a certain man was in a body or in the heavens or on the earth or in Hell, he would reply that he was in a body as something contained, in Heaven as something blessed, in Hell as something afflicted. He is not confined to any one of these places because he is not a thing of dimensions at all. Baghdādī says that this means that man is like Allah. When a man is in the body as its governor and not in the sense of being circumscribed in a place, it is the same as what is attributed to Allah, who is in place as directing it, and being aware of what is happening in it, and not as being circumscribed by it. Thus Mu'ammar held that man's nature was spiritual or, as Al Ghazzālī was afterwards to express it, that man was a spiritual substance (*jawhar rūhānī*). The Bakrites<sup>2</sup> who were followers of Bakr b. Ukht 'Abd ul Wāhid b. Ziyād, are credited by Baghdādī with the same enlightened heresy. They asserted that man is a spirit and not a body in which spirit resides. The Christian view involves the spiritual nature of man. Man has a body which is taken from the visible and material creation, but on the higher side he has affinity with the spiritual.<sup>3</sup> Something similar is involved in the distinction in the Qur'ān between the fashioning of clay and the inbreathing of spirit into man. Man's supremacy in the world is on account of his rational nature. The rest of creation is intended to minister to his needs and even the angels of God have their service to perform for him.<sup>4</sup> This is practically identical with the Quranic teaching. Man is intended on the other hand to be the servant of God. The Qur'ān describes him as '*'abd* or slave (see Suras li. 56; ii. 182; xviii. 64, etc.). Life is a probation and discipline (Sura lxxvi. 2). John of Damascus summarizes many of these points in his treatise on the orthodox faith, "The bond of union between man and inanimate things is the body and its composition out of the four elements. The bond between man and plants consists in addition to these in their powers of assimilating nutriment, in growth and in generation." He says that the appetites connect brute beasts and man, the irascible and the concupiscent, the senses and the power of voluntary movement. "Man's reason unites him to incorporeal and intel-

<sup>1</sup> *Mundi Op.*, 46 (i. 32).

<sup>2</sup> *Vide Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. VI.

<sup>3</sup> Gregory of Nyssa : *Or. Cat.*, 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

lignant natures. . . ." The reasoning or thinking soul ( $\psi \nu \chi \bar{\eta} \lambda o y u k \bar{\eta}$ ), which is in the Muslim sources *nafs natiqa*, is bestowed on man by the inbreathing of God and this, according to the Damascene, is what is meant by the "image of God" in man. Obedient to reason are the irascible and the concupiscent, and not amenable to reason because not under its control are the nutritive, the generative and the pulsating powers. "The forces inherent in a living creature are partly psychical, partly vegetative, and partly vital. The psychical powers are concerned with free volition . . . the vegetative and vital forces are quite beyond the range of will."<sup>1</sup> We have seen how Ibn Miskawaih regarded man as the microcosm. Similarly in John of Damascus, "Man is a microcosm." "God made man without evil, upright, virtuous, free from pain and trouble, glorified with every virtue, adorned with all that is good, like a second microcosm in the macrocosm, another angel capable of worship, composite, surveying the visible creation and initiated into the mysteries of the thought world, king over the things of the earth, but himself subject to a higher king, belonging to earth and heaven, temporal and eternal, belonging both to the world of visible things and the world of thought, half-way between greatness and lowliness, between spirit and flesh."<sup>2</sup> Thus is he the vinculum of the cosmos.

Generally speaking, the Eastern theologians of Christianity are specially favourable to the doctrine of the freewill of man, and sometimes it has been said that in this they are in contrast to Augustine. When we come to examine the two, however, the differences are less obvious than the agreement. Thus Augustine believes in the impairment of man's freedom by sin, but Theodore of Mopsuestia declares quite plainly the same thing. Augustine, however, because he regards character as a unity, could speak of sinful nature whereas Theodore is more inclined to attribute sin to the will than to the nature.<sup>3</sup> Chrysostom considers that the moral purpose is impaired when men sin.<sup>4</sup> We have seen that Augustine cannot be said to have denied the fundamental freedom of man's will. It could be generally accepted that "God made man free and self-determining".<sup>5</sup> It is self-will which turns us from righteousness and freewill of itself cannot initiate the return of the soul to God. This is Augustine's view, and it is in this particular that he differs from the Antiochene school. Chrysostom held, for instance, that God does not anticipate our will, but when we take the initiative He provides a way of salvation for us,<sup>6</sup> whereas

<sup>1</sup> *De Fide Orthod.*, Bk. II, Cap. xii (P.G., 94, 929).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. II, Cap. xii (P.G., 94, 921). For man as the microcosm, see also Philo, *Quis rer. div. heres*, 31 (i. 494).

<sup>3</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia : *Original Sin*, Bk. III.

<sup>4</sup> *Hom. in Rom.* xii. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Theophilus : *Ad Autolycum*, Bk. II, Cap. xxvii.

<sup>6</sup> *Hom. in Joan.*, xviii. 3.

Augustine says, "We are not freed from righteousness except by choice ; we are not freed from sin except by the grace of the Redeemer."<sup>1</sup>

There was some difference of opinion as to whether the human spirit pre-existed. Philo combines the idea of creation by the inbreathing of the spirit of God with the Platonist's idea of the pre-existence of souls without reconciling the two. Origen considers that souls did pre-exist. Evil arose through a wrong choice on their part before creation.<sup>2</sup> Some of these souls find a sphere of discipline in the world, and by their purgation are fitted to return to their former happy state. Origen says that good men like Job curse their birthdays : for birth is really a fall from a high estate. This idea is frequently encountered in the mystical writers of Islam. Whether the soul was naturally immortal is not a matter of primary concern with the orthodox theologians of Islam. In general the view is taken that just as life is in the first instance a gift from God, so it is by a special act of God that man is raised to a new life. The parallel between the first creation into the world and the second creation after death is well sustained throughout the Qur'an. Thus the orthodox doctrine is most clearly a doctrine of the resurrection of the body and not a theory of the survival of the soul. There is, however, the strange view that man in the grave is capable of being interrogated and of answering to angel inquisitors who visit him there. This is one of the problems which the dogmatic theologians essay to elucidate. On the other hand, as we have seen in Ibn Miskawaih, the Hellenistic thought influenced Islam in regard to this matter of the immortality of the soul, and so many hold that the soul is immortal by its very nature and it is only the body which is subject to corruption and death. Strictly speaking this matter belongs to the next section.

### (III) THE SOUL

Since we have provided material whereby the extent to which the philosophical conceptions of the soul were influential in early Islam can be estimated, by the translation of the section on the soul in Ibn Miskawaih's shorter theology, and the footnotes there given, it is not necessary for us to repeat such matters here. And as the fully developed doctrine must be dealt with later it seems better to limit what is said in this section to the Quranic and Semitic elements, and to some illustrations from the early sectarian disputes.

Psychology tends to be physiological in varying degrees in the sources with which we have to deal. Though this is specially true of the Semitic it is also true of the Hellenized doctrine of the soul to a certain extent. In the Old Testament, beside *Neshāmāh*, *Nephesh*, and *Rūah*, used for soul and spirit, we have a psychological use of

<sup>1</sup> *Cont. duas Epp. Pelag.*, ii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Origen : *Com. in Rom.* viii. and i. *Cor.* xv.

such terms as bowels (*mē'im*), liver (*kābēd*), kidneys or reins (*kelāyōth*), and heart (*lēb* and *lebāb*). Thus, "Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth" (Lam. ii. 11) expresses deep emotion and "liver" is the seat of sexual desire in Prov. vii. 23. "My reins shall rejoice" (Prov. xxiii. 16), "My heart was grieved and I was pricked in my reins" (Ps. lxxiii. 21), and "My reins are consumed within me" (Job xix. 27) express the emotions of joy and grief and the idea that the reins are the seat of desire. Sexual love (Song of Songs v. 4), and compassion (Isa. xvi. 11) are associated with the bowels. Heart is used extensively with a psychological significance, both in the Old Testament and in the Qur'ān. The heart is spoken of as the seat of intellectual functions as e.g., in Exod. vii. 23, Deut. vii. 17, Suras vii. 178 and xxii. 45. It is the heart by which one remembers (Suras xviii. 27 and l. 36 and Deut. iv. 9), and exercises purpose and will (Suras ii. 200, xxxiii. 5, Ezek. xxviii. 2 ff., 1 Sam. ii. 35). It is the heart which is hardened when men are obdurate (Exod. viii. 5, Sura v. 16, etc.). It is also the centre of the emotions, joy, courage and fear, love, anxiety (Suras iii. 144, xxxix. 46, iii. 98, Gen. xlvi. 28, 1 Sam. i. 8, iv. 13, and 2 Sam. xiv. 1. Religious and moral functions are ascribed to it (Suras ii. 225 and lvii. 15, xxvi. 89, xxxvii. 82), belief and doubt (Sura xlix. 15, lviii. 22 and ix. 45). It may be the seat of piety (Sura xxii. 33) or sick with sin (Sura lxxiv. 33 and numerous other places; cf. Isa. i. 5). Its perversity and illwill are spoken of (Suras lix. 10 and iii. 5-6). The heart may be repentant (Sura l. 32), and it is to the heart that the divine revelation comes (Sura ii. 91, xxvi. 194, lvii. 27). It may be assumed that some of these expressions are metaphorical, as they are with us at the present day, but they really go deeper than that. The Qur'ān, or rather the Arabic, has shed some of the Hebrew physiological terms, but nevertheless the Semitic idiom is unmistakable.

The two most important terms in the Qur'ān apart from "heart" (*qalb*) are *nafs* (soul) and *rūh* (spirit). Reference should be made to the very full account of these in Lane's *Lexicon*. The general significance of *rūh* is similar to that of *nafs*, though in a few points they are different. It means the vital principle, a subtle vaporous substance, which is the principle of vitality, sensation and voluntary action and is sometimes called *rūh haiwāniya* or animal spirit. Just slightly different is the view that it is a subtle body, the source of which is the hollow of the corporeal heart, and which diffuses itself into all the other parts of the body by means of the pulsing veins and arteries. Sura xv. 30 refers to this, according to Baidāwi's commentary. A similar idea is to be found in the Old Testament (cf. Gen. ix. 4) where the blood was considered to be the vital principle. Philo also can speak of "the blood-soul"<sup>1</sup> Al Faiyūmī said in the *Miṣbāḥ* that philosophers take

<sup>1</sup> *Quod det. pot. ins. 23* (i. 207), etc.

*rūh* and blood as equivalent, because by the exhaustion of the blood life ceases. This vital fluid is sometimes called *rūh tibbiya*: for it is the spirit with which the physician has to do. In the Old Testament *ruah* is also the vital breath of man and beast (Job xxvii. 3 and Isa. xlvi. 5).<sup>1</sup> A second meaning of *rūh* is not so much as "vital spirit" but as "the rational soul", i.e., *an nafs un nātiqa* or *an nafs ul insāni* which mean speaking or human soul. This is adapted to the faculty of making known ideas by means of speech, and of understanding speech. It is the unique property of the human being. It is not liable to perish with the body because it is a substance and not an accident. It is claimed that this is proved by Sura iii. 163. In the popular notion it is sometimes thought to go into the grave with the corpse. As the rational principle *ruah* is "the spirit of wisdom" in the Old Testament, e.g., Exod. xxviii. 3 and Deut. xxxiv. 9. Another classification of *rūh* is in reference to inspiration, e.g., in Suras xvi. 2, xl. 15 and especially Sura xlvi. 52, "And thus have we inspired thee with a spirit, from our *amr*; thou didst not know what the Book was nor the faith: but we made it a light whereby We guide whom We will of our servants", where it is related to the functions of the prophet. In the Old Testament it is associated in this manner with ecstatic frenzy (1 Sam. xvi. 15 f., where Saul is affected) and with supernatural influences (Num. xi. 17 and 1 Sam. x. 6-10), and prophetic experience (Ezek. xxxvii. 1 and xlvi. 5). It is by the spirit that utterance is given (Isa. xlvi. 16). Similarly in the Qur'ān it is used in connexion with supernatural influence (Suras xxvi. 193, xl. 15, lviii. 22.) Sometimes *rūh* refers to supernatural beings as in Sura xvi. 2 (cf. Job iv. 15). In this manner it is used of Gabriel (Sura xxvi. 193). According to Ibn 'Abbās and the *Tāj ul 'Arūs* the *Rūh* is an angel in the seventh heaven whose face is like a man's and whose "body" is like that of an angel. The term is applicable to ghosts, to *jinn*, and to devils, and is often used to explain demoniac possession. In the Old Testament *ruah* is used where more normally we find *nafs* in Islamic usage in reference to the phenomena of psychical life, e.g., for passion and anger (Judges viii. 3), for grief (Gen. xxvi. 35 and Job vii. 11), and earnestness or zest (Hag. i. 14). Of the inbreathing of the divine spirit it is said that this is not part of the divine and attributable to Him as "face" and "hand"; it represents the action of the divine in connecting the spirit with the body of man. Zamākhsharī says on xv. 30, "There was no real breathing nor anything breathed into but the passage is an allegory of the creation of life in man." Al Ghazzālī regarded it as blowing to kindle the vital spark. The Old Testament also associates the *rūh* very particularly with the moral functions of man, e.g., in Ps. li. 10, Ezek. xi. 19, xviii. 31. The usage is not noticeable in the Qur'ān. We have discussed elsewhere the idea of

<sup>1</sup> Other references are Suras xxxii. 8, and xxxviii. 72.

the Spirit in relation to Jesus, supernatural beings, and the *Logos* in various places.<sup>1</sup>

The terms *Nafs* and *Nephesh* now fall to be considered. As *rūh* and *rūah* these are used for the vital principle or for "life", e.g., Sura iii. 139 and 182 and 1 Kings xix. 10 and Ps. xxxv. 4. They sometimes have a mere reflexive significance as "himself", "itself", e.g., Sura v. 28 and 116, and apply to a person or individual, e.g., Gen. xii. 5, Suras xxviii. 18, xxxi. 27 and vi. 93, without any particular psychological significance. When the word is used in relation to Allah it has this neutral sense, and in the strictest sense of the word it cannot be said that Allah has a *nafs* as he has a *Rūh*—although as we have seen, some would deny both to Allah. In psychical significance we have *nafs* and *nephesh* as the seat of desire or appetite (cf. Deut. xxi. 14, Num. xxi. 5, Suras lxxix. 40, xii. 53) or emotion and passion in general (cf. Gen. xiii. 21 and Suras liii. 23, xlvi. 71, xx. 96, v. 33, l. 15, vii. 204). The *nafs* has a moral function, e.g., Sura lxxv. 2, where it is called self-accusing (*lawwāma*) and xci. 7–10. Sometimes *nafs* is considered to be the principle of carnality and *nafsānī* is often used in this way, but this is not Quranic, though the proneness of the soul to avarice is spoken of in Sura iv. 127. Al Ghazzālī developed the idea of *nafs* in the sense mentioned until it seems almost equivalent to the Pauline principle of "the flesh". A peculiar conception in the Qur'an is of the soul tranquillized (*muṭama'ina*) which is almost like the soul in good conscience contrasted with the soul "urgent to evil" (*ammāra* Sura xii. 53). *An nafs un nāfiqa* has already been noticed, and *nephesh* occurs in the Old Testament with an intellectual and volitional connotation in Prov. ii. 10 and Gen. xxiii. 8.

There is a great deal of doubt as to whether Islam regarded the soul as incorporeal. Some would even go so far as to say there is a separate soul, which is in most respects equivalent to the "separate substance" of Muslim and Christian scholastic, and this would imply incorporeality, another *rūh* which is non-elemental (*ghayr 'unsurī*) body, and another which is elemental ('*unsurī*) body. Most regard *rūh* as a rare humour or vapour (*laṭifa*), but some declare that the *rūh* must be corporeal in the strictest sense because there is only one incorporeality and that is Allah. This is the reason why it is regarded as a heresy to say that man is a spirit without dimensions. It is on the other hand regarded as shocking to suggest that God is a spirit because spirit is, if not corporeal, at least semi-corporeal.

In the early debates Nazzām, so we are informed by Baghdādī, declared that man was a soul. In the body there was a composite union and that which is visible is only the body and not the real man. It is the human agent in the body rather than the body itself which is the receptacle of the soul. Baghdādī argues that in such a case the

<sup>1</sup> See Index.

real thief is not punished when his hand is cut off. Nazzām considered that soul had life *per se*, and it only had experience of anything injurious through association with the body. He held that "a living body could not die". Thus it would seem that he held that the soul was immortal, though it is difficult to reconstruct his thought from the brief notices we have of it. Transmigration or metempsychosis was strongly attacked by all the early orthodox writers.<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that the prevalence of that belief in Manichæism<sup>2</sup> had something to do with this antagonism, but it is also due to the ideas of extreme Rāfidites (Shi'ites). The men who were considered to have adopted this heretical doctrine were Ahmad b. Hā'it, Ahmad b. Ayyūb b. Yanūsh, Muhammad b. Ahmad al Qahtābī, Abū Muslim al Harrānī and 'Abd ul Karim b. Abi 'Awjā'. The first mentioned taught that men were created perfect in reason, pure in heart and safe in a realm above this present world. There man knew God. When men disobeyed they went as devils to hell, and when they mixed their obedience with some faults they were sent to this world in order that they might be purged of their sins. This is very like the view which Origen adopted. It will be seen that this implies an essential spirituality in man and that the bodily life is accidental. Ibn Yanūsh is said to have taught that the souls which pre-existed had the choice as to whether they would descend to the lower world for their testing. In the testing those who failed became beasts, and those who were obedient became human beings. Beasts were then relieved of any further responsibility. In such views Neoplatonism had some influence, but the contact of the early Muslims with Eastern religious thought may have had some influence also.

The various alternatives had been suggested to account for the origin of the soul. This hypothesis of pre-existence was one of them, and some found support for it in Sura vii. 171 to which we have referred before. Others considered that souls were created with bodies, each soul being a separate creation simultaneous with the body. Others, again, conceived that souls are transmitted with the seed and that thus both body and soul are due to parents. Even a traditionalist like Ibn Hazm could believe that souls awaited birth in the intermediate state or *Barzakh*. The idea that there was a creative act in the womb was argued from Sura vii. 8 ff. and from the many statements of the agency of God in the birth of men as, e.g., Suras xxxv. 12, liii. 46 f., lxxv. 34. Traducianism does not seem to have found much favour.

Other common notions are as follows. The dead are aware that they are visited when people come to their tombs. Ibn Hanbal records in his *Musnad* the tradition from 'Amru b. Hazm to the effect that when the Prophet saw him leaning on a grave, he told him not to annoy its

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Baghdadi : *al Farg bain al Firaq*, Pt. IV, Cap. xii.

<sup>2</sup> Jackson : (*JAOS*) xliv. 246-68.

occupant.<sup>1</sup> The dead are punished in the grave<sup>2</sup> and the spirit returns into the corpse for the inquisition. Sura iv. 71 is supposed to indicate that the good who have died have some sort of intercourse. That the spirits of the living meet the spirits of the dead in sleep is supposed to be taught by Sura xxxix. 43, "God takes to Himself souls at the time of their death and those which have not died (He takes) in their sleep." The spirit's separation from the body is the death of the spirit, just as the body's separation from the spirit is the death of the body, but this does not mean that the soul ceases to be, as this is disproved by Sura iii. 163 f., "Count not those who are killed in the way of God as dead, but living with their Lord". Sura xiii. 17 and similar passages must mean that the soul also is created.

What had been repudiated in these early centuries, namely, that man was essentially a spiritual substance, came to be accepted shortly afterwards by Al Ghazzālī. His doctrine is associated with the words in Gen. i. 27, which have now become a tradition from the mouth of the Prophet, "God made man in the image of Rahmān", and Suras xv. 26 ff., vii. 10 and xxxii. 8. "The *rūh* is not a body located in the body as in a vessel, nor is it an accident located in the heart and brain, as knowledge in one who knows, but it is substance (*jawhar*), because it knows itself and its Creator and perceives intelligible things." Man is thus spiritual substance (*jawhar rūhānī*). "This is not a case of comparison (*tashbih*) of man to Allah, for the specific difference of Allah is that He is *Qayyūm*, that is, 'self-subsisting', and everything besides Him subsists by Him."<sup>3</sup> Sufism eagerly seized on what Al Ghazzālī had written because in this doctrine there was a possibility of some kinship between the *Rūh* of Allah and the *rūh* of man. This view was, however, not acceptable to the ultra-orthodox and we find definite rejection of Al Ghazzālī's doctrine in Ibn Qayyim's *Kitāb ur Rūh*.

#### G. SIN, SALVATION AND JUDGMENT

##### (I) SIN

The Qur'ān employs its terms loosely when it speaks of human sin, but some general ideas may be gathered from the vocabulary. *Sharr* is used in a very general sense for all evils whether these can be thought of as moral evils or not. *Sayyi'āt* are calamitous things which when they happen involve injury to the one responsible for them. Evil is thought to be brought upon men by their own act, and the term used is *kasaba* which means to acquire or earn. A derivative (*kasb*) was to be used by Al Ash'arī for the acquirement of acts by man to distinguish his action from the creative action of God. "Whoso gains an evil gain" are the words used in Sura ii. 75 and Sura x. 28, "As for those

<sup>1</sup> *Mishkāt*, *Kitāb ul Janā'iz*. See also *Sahīh* of Muslim, *Janā'iz* 94, 96-98, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Bukhārī*: *Sahīh*, *Kitāb ul 'Ilm*, 24, etc.

<sup>3</sup> See Macdonald : *Moslem World Quarterly* Vol. xxii, p. 154.

who have earned ill, the reward of evil is the like thereof" carries the same thought. Other passages of interest are Sura xl. 48, where *sayyi'āt* is used in a very general sense and hardly with a moral significance at all, and Sura vii. 167, where the meaning is simply calamities or adversities.<sup>1</sup> The term *dhanb* is one which is difficult to understand. The root gives no real clue to the meaning. It may have the significance of being overtaken by a fault or rather that which overtakes man, in somewhat the same way as the idiom is used, "If anyone be overtaken in a fault". The term is applied to the Prophet in Suras xl. 57, xlvii. 21 and xlviii. 2, and this has led a number of commentators to consider that the term refers to minor misdemeanours. This might be supported by Sura ix. 103, where the term is used in relation to something evil mixed with a good action, "Others have confessed their sins, that they have mixed with a righteous action another evil action." But when other passages are consulted it seems quite conclusive that the term has no special connotation of light or heavy and may be used indifferently of either. If it is only used of light sins then this would involve the conclusion that Allah punishes people over harshly for minor offences. For instance, it is often said that God destroys people in their sins (*dhu'nib*) (Sura vi. 6 and many other places), or that He wishes to fall on them for some *dhanb* (Sura v. 54). Moreover, the unbelievers who resisted the prophets, Korah, Pharaoh, and Hāmān, are described as guilty of *dhanb*, and those who disbelieved in the signs of God (Suras viii. 54 and iii. 9), also those who called the Messenger of Allah a liar (xcii. 14). Thus it will be seen that a categorical statement that *dhanb* refers to small delinquencies cannot be sustained. The term is the one which Muslims use in general for their sins when they pray in the words taught them by the Prophet for God's forgiveness.

The term *Khatī'a*, although it too can be used in a general sense for sin of any sort, is capable of a more special and particular interpretation. *Khatā'a*, he missed, may be said of the archer who misses the target with his arrow, and therefore the term is equivalent to the Greek word *ἀπαρτία* which is used in the New Testament. This missing may be accidental and the term from the same root, namely *khat'*, is used in jurisprudence to signify that which is done by mistake, in contrast to that which is done purposely ('*amd*). "There is no crime against you for what mistakes you make" (Sura xxxiii. 5) shows that crime (*junāh*) is of deeper significance than *khatī'a*. However, while the term may be used for that which is done unwittingly or in ignorance (Sura xxvi. 82), it can also be used for that which is done with full knowledge (Sura xxvi. 51). In one place the word is used for something which has been reckoned as one of the great sins in Islam, i.e., infanticide (Sura xvii. 33). In spite of this ambiguity in the Qur'ān, Fiqh has

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Suras v. 70 and ix. 9.

persistently made the term apply to the unintentional. The differentiation is also indicated by the fact that it was a matter of dispute between the Mu'tazilites and the orthodox as to whether *khat'* was punishable or not. The Mu'tazilites declared that it was not, but the orthodox said it was. In the hairsplitting legalism of the early days we find acts differentiated as '*amd*' or '*amd mahd*', intentional or absolutely intentional, *khat'* or *khat' mahd*, unintentional or undoubtedly unintentional, *shabah 'amd*, doubtful intention, *jārī majra'l khat'*, accidentally involved, *bi sabab*, contributing cause. Though unintentional acts may be forgiven by God, in the opinion of some, atonement must be made as a condition of such forgiveness. For unintentional homicide a bloodwit had to be paid or a slave released. This applied to the killing of a Muslim the intentional killing of whom is punishable by Hell. Similarly restitution must be made for unintentional infringement of property rights.

The term *ithm* suggests intention rather than the actual committing of a sin in deed (cf. Suras v. 3, 5 and ii. 168). This term gives the nearest approach to the idea of the inward nature of sin. Thus it is appropriately used in the verse, "Leave alone the outside of sin and the inside thereof" (Sura vi. 120). It indicates a wrong attitude either to God or to man, "He who associates anything with God has devised a mighty sin" (Sura iv. 51) and "Verily, some suspicion is sin", i.e., *ithm* (Sura xl ix. 12). It can be used of one of the great sins, namely, slandering chaste women (Sura xxiv. 11). The term *harām* conveys the idea of prohibition particularly in a religious sense. The one guilty of an act of this character is guilty of sacrilege or profanation. Sometimes there is no particular moral idea attached, but it applies to ritual uncleanness and taboo. In Sura ii. 168 it applies to a violation of the rule concerning blood, and in Sura v. 96 to the killing of game on pilgrimage. The evil is contracted by the circumstances or by something external to the act itself, such as a divine prohibition. The word *zulm* is also used for sin, and while it frequently bears the significance of injustice as in Sura xii. 79 it could be better translated as "iniquity" in many cases. Something of the dual significance of the Greek *δικαιοσύνη*, which is applicable to justice and also to righteousness in a wider sense, attaches to the use of this term. The word *i'tidā* (Sura ii. 190) conveys the idea of exceeding what is due or transgression of a law, and *junāh* has the significance of a technical fault (Sura xxiv. 59-60), or something rather more than this (Sura xxxiii. 5).

When we compare this vocabulary with that of the Old Testament we find some words in common. Thus *hāṭā'* is equivalent to *khaṭ'a* and is used very frequently for sinning against God, for instance, Lev. v. 1; Ps. iv. 4; Isa. xl iii. 27; and sometimes this is used in connexion with unintentional fault, but generally has the wider

significance (cf. Num. xv. 27 where another word has to be added to convey the idea of mistake). *Asham* is the equivalent of *iṭhm*, but here the significance is guilt, though it will be seen that the inward aspect of sin is here too. The idea of iniquity is conveyed by '*awōn*', and that of transgression by '*peshā'* (see 1 Kings xvii. 18 and Prov. xxviii. 13 respectively). We have in a previous section referred to wrong acts incurred by the violation of what is holy (cf. 2 Sam. vi. 6). The Old Testament is, however, very rich in expressions which contribute to the understanding of what sin and evil are. The violence and inordinance of evil (Isa. lix. 7), rebellion (Isa. lxiii. 10), foolishness or fleshliness (Jer. x. 8), ignorance (Ps. cvii. 17), ungodliness (Ps. xviii. 4), impiety (Ps. xlivi. 1), perversity (Job xvi. 11), deceit (Ps. ci. 7), defilement (Ps. cvi. 39), and many more aspects can be found there.

The Old Testament emphasizes throughout the idea that sin is against God, "Against Thee only have I sinned and done that which is evil in Thy sight" (Ps. li. 4), "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Gen. xxxix. 9), whereas in the Qur'ān the emphasis is on the injury that a man does to himself when he sins (Sura xvi. 35-36 cf. xvii. 7). In Sura ii. 54-55 it is expressly said that man does not wrong God but himself. Thus in the Qur'ān the appeal to righteousness is often an appeal to self-interest, though it should be remembered that this is not entirely absent from the Old Testament (Isa. i. 5). Man has something to do for himself which no one else can do (Sura xxxv. 18). In this there is more than a hint that man cannot expect any help in the burden he has to bear.

Sin is regarded in the light of a debt in Islam just as good deeds are regarded as so many credits to the one who performs them. Since God has bought men and has the ownership of them, any failure on their part to do what He commands is so much indebtedness to Him. Man is an '*abd*', a slave, and God owns him and His right is absolute. "Verily God hath bought of the believers their persons and their wealth" (Sura ix. 112). He is not niggardly of the hire of his servants (Sura ix. 122) when they do well. "Verily those who recite the Book of God, and are steadfast in prayer, and give alms of what we have bestowed, in secret and in public, hope for the merchandise that shall not come to naught; that He may pay them their hire and give them increase of His grace" (Sura xxxv. 26). The same note is struck in Sura lxi. 10-11, "O ye who believe, shall I lead you to a merchandise which will save you from grievous woe? to believe in God and His Messenger and to fight hard in God's cause with your property and your persons; that is better for you did ye but know." It is thus a good bargain to believe in God and the Book. The debts which man owes to God are variously classed. Sometimes they are set out in three main sections: (1) What is owed directly to Allah; (2) what is

owed to the Qur'ān and (3) What is owed to Creatures. Those things owed directly to Allah are : *acts of the heart*, which include faith, the belief in and worship of God as one, repentance, submission (*Islām*) and obedience ; *acts of the tongue*, which include the ascription of honour and praise to God, confession of Him with the lips, seeking refuge with Him, supplication and prayer (*du'ā*) ; *acts of the person*, i.e., bodily acts, including the ritual worship, ablutions, purificatory acts, attendance at the mosque and fasting ; *acts of property* consisting mainly of the statutory alms and the pilgrimage to Mecca. The duties owed to people are within the *dīn*, i.e., they are the code which is obligatory on the Muslim in his relations with other Muslims. Under this he has certain rights as well as obligations. He forfeits the rights if he apostasizes. His whole life is regulated by the code (*shari'a*), and though this is not directly related to Allah, it is so through his creatures ; the Prophet, other prophets, the learned, the taught, the ruler and the subject, the parent and the child, the husband and the wife, the whole range of relationship, neighbours, guests, hosts, beggars, orphans, slaves, female slaves and masters, the poor and travellers, friends and enemies, Jews and Christians, tradesmen and people in general, and at last the deceased ; to all, in whatsoever relationship he stands, he is under certain strictly prescribed obligations and is equally the possessor of rights which impose obligations on others. This complete whole constitutes the account which a man has to settle while he is in life or, in particular matters, by handing on some undischarged duty to be done after his death. This is not only a legalistic system, but a commercial system. It is best for a man to begin earning his merits now and to take pains to see that they are adequate in quantity. Tradition presses home the point. "One prayer in this Mosque of mine (at Medina) is better than a thousand prayers in any other except the Holy Mosque (at Mecca)."¹ Both Muslim and Bukhārī record the tradition that prayer in the congregation excels prayer said alone by twenty-seven degrees.² "The Messenger of Allah said, 'Whoever recites two hundred times every day the sura "Say, He is God alone", the sins of fifty years will be erased from him, unless he has a debt.'"³ The prayer with the *Miswāk* is seventy times more meritorious than that without.⁴ It is often said that the one who recites prayer in the local mosque acquires the merit of twenty-five recitations of the ritual *salāt*, in the Juma' Masjid of his city five hundred, in the Mosques at Medina or Jerusalem fifty thousand, and in the Ka'aba at Mecca one hundred thousand. If any ritual duty such as fasting or ritual prayer is neglected the *fidyā* has to be paid.⁵ The

¹ *Mishkāt* : *Salāt*, on Mosques.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid. Fadā'il ul Qur'ān.*

⁴ Baihaqī in *Mishkāt* ; *Salāt*.

⁵ Muslim : *Siyam* Trad. 81, 87.

debt of *qadā'* is incurred by neglecting the ritual worship and compensation over and above the ordinary prescriptions must be paid to God. For the neglect of other duties there is expiation (*kaffāra*). The terms are quite plain. The traditions say that the wages of one who prays sitting are half the wages of the one who prays standing.<sup>1</sup> It will be seen that this system means that man is by sin rendered a debtor and that he can discharge his debt within the framework of Islam by meritorious acts which will cancel out his debts.

It must be remembered that the teaching of the New Testament does not exclude the doctrine of rewards for good deeds and the language of debt is used by St. Paul. But there the doctrine is not commercialized, and there is a condemnation by Christ of the ostentatious worship of the pharisee, and teaching which is the very antithesis of formalism. Indeed, the criticism which is often offered of the Christian religion by Muslims is the absence of a formal code. The legal way is thought by some to be easier than that which is offered in the New Testament, and so within Christianity there have been teachers who have considered that Christianity could be interpreted in a legal way. Thus when Tertullian writes about penitence he says that in rendering satisfaction or penance there is a compensation in remittance of penalty,<sup>2</sup> and that mortification of the body brings remission of eternal punishment.<sup>3</sup> It may be said that Tertullian deprecates the use of the term "merit" in this connexion because he realizes human limitations in relation to the Divine will, but the same thing might be said in Islam, namely, that merit (*thawāb*) does not place any obligation upon God. God remains perfectly free and under no obligation from the virtue of any creature. The tradition from Ibn 'Abbās is that "God forgives heavy sins to whomsoever He pleases and punishes for minor sins whomsoever He pleases" in amplification of Sura iii. 124, "He forgives whom He pleases and punishes whom He pleases". Broadly speaking the difference is that debt in the Christian sense is a debt of love to love whereas in Islam it is the debt of a slave to an owner. God has absolute rights over creatures by reason of His creative and providential power. In Christianity the right of God over men is His grace. "The love of Christ constraineth me." It must not be supposed, however, that there has been no rebellion against this legalistic view in Islam. The mystics especially have insisted that to do good works in the hope of Paradise is to have an unworthy motive and to do good for God's sake only is the higher calling.

It is to be observed that the orthodox Muslim view is that there can be no sin where there is no knowledge, and this is quite in line with the statements of St. Paul with regard to the function of the Law. It

<sup>1</sup> *Bukhārī*: *Taqṣīr us-Salāt* Bāb 7, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *De Poenit.*, 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

is by the Law that there is the knowledge of sin. On the other hand, the neglect of knowledge is itself a sin, and God has sent His prophets so that men may be without excuse in this respect. The Mu'tazilites, however, hold that the knowledge of good and evil is rational.

The position of Islam with regard to sin of the heart is somewhat ambiguous. In the ritual worship "intention" (*nīya*) is an essential part. The trouble is that *nīya* tends to become formal too, a simple affirmation that a certain part of the ritual worship is about to be performed. The mystics emphasize that a man's heart should be in his devotions (*hudūr i dil*), but with most the formal perfection of the worship with the verbal "intention" fulfils all the obligation. There is a tradition which says, "The Messenger of Allah said: 'Allah does not take into account what the members of my community think so long as they do not give expression to it, or actually do it.'"<sup>1</sup> If this is to be taken literally, then there is no such thing as a sin of the heart, and yet it is sometimes held that the lightest sins are sinful thoughts, and there are contradictory traditions which assert that extreme sensitiveness to evil thoughts is to be considered a mark of great religious virtue.<sup>2</sup> There is a hint of a desire to attain to inwardness in the definition of sin in what is reported in the heresiologies about the Bahshamites who were followers of Al Jubbā'i and Abū Ḥashim. It is said that they held that one who is able to do something and desires to do it, may not actually do it and yet commit infidelity. It is also reported of Jubbā'i that he believed it was possible for a person to be disobedient without actual disobedience. That is the way Baghdādī puts it. We may conjecture that Al Jubbā'i held the view that anything which contributed to or led up to an evil act was punishable, and that this is represented in a rather grotesque way by his opponents as meaning that a separate punishment was due to every motion which led to an evil act.<sup>3</sup> One reply which Baghdādī gives shows that he drew the obvious inference from what Jubbā'i had said but does not realize that in saying what he did he exhibits a pure externalism. His criticism is that if it were possible to have a disobedient person without actual disobedience (i.e., disobedience in overt act), then it would be possible to have an obedient person without actual obedience and an unbelieving person without actual unbelief. This he thinks is impossible, but there are circumstances in which it could be possible. A person might have all the outward signs of a believer and yet be an unbeliever in heart, unless outward signs are all that is required to make a man a believer. Somewhat of the same sort of idea lies behind the disagreement as to what constitutes obedience. In debate with Al Ash'arī, Al Jubbā'i said that obedience was agreement to the will of

<sup>1</sup> Muslim : *Imān*, Trad. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Muslim : *Imān*, Trad. 209.

<sup>3</sup> Baghdādī : *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. iii. ,

Allah rather than to a command. In addition to this there seems to be a protest against externalism when Nazzām denied that impurity could be contracted unconsciously in sleep, and when he refused to consider the making up of neglected ritual prayer as a merit.<sup>1</sup> With regard to ritual prayer, it is recorded that Hishām b. 'Amr al Fawātī denied that it could be an act of obedience if it were defective. This might point in either direction, for its defectiveness might be considered from the point of view of formal perfection, or from a judgment as to whether it was worship from the heart or not. Another sign of the ethical earnestness of Al Jubbā'i is that he could not consider that repentance for sin was acceptable so long as some other sin was indulged in, so long, of course, as this indulged sin was known to be sin or believed to be. Such ideas transfer virtue from outward acts to character. There also remains the vexed question as to how far men are free and in this connection Al Jubbā'i insists that there must be a possibility for the commission of sin before repentance can be regarded as valid or in any way admissible. Thus if a man cannot speak there is no meaning in his repenting from telling a lie, etc.

The division between great and small sins which appears in the earliest traditions seems to owe something to a Christian division into mortal and venial sins which found its origin in 1 John v. 16 f. There are remarkable similarities between some of the views expressed and those we find in Augustine.<sup>2</sup> For instance, it is said that sins done in levity and bold desire are great sins, which reminds us of the *deliberata complacentia* of Augustine.<sup>3</sup> The artificial classification of the deadly sins as seven had taken place in the very earliest days of Christianity, and we find that Islam has its seven great sins also, but they are not the same as in the Christian lists. The tradition says that the Prophet told his followers to avoid the seven great sins. When he was asked what they were he said "Polytheism, sorcery, unlawful homicide, defrauding orphans, extortionate interest, desertion in battle, slandering chaste women."<sup>4</sup> Other lists differ and we find included in the deadly sins : inhumanity to parents, infanticide and adultery. Of these great sins polytheism is the direct negation of Islam and, in the orthodox view, it is only this which constitutes infidelity and is unpardonable. This may be a reflection of the association of the "sin unto death" of 1 John v. 16-17 with the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost which was complete rejection of God. The Khārijites thought that any of the great sins impaired faith and they slew the wicked as they did the infidels. Bakr b. Ukt 'Abd ul Wāhid b.

<sup>1</sup> Baghdādi : *Farg*, III, iii.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *De Gen. con. Man.*, viii. 19-20, and *Enarr. in Ps.*, 129, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *De Civitate Dei* lib. XXI, Cap xxvii. for further distinctions between venial and mortal sins.

<sup>4</sup> Muslim : *Imān*, Trad. 144.

Ziyād said that sin was unbelief and punishable by Hell even if the sinner were a believing Muslim. "Infidelity can only be forgiven when a man becomes a believer but he who dies an infidel or an idolater will not be forgiven," said the orthodox, basing their belief on Sura iv. 51 and 136. Their authority for the division into minor and major sins was Sura xlvi. 35. Other opinions which we find on the matter are that constant persistence in small sins makes them mortal and that no sin is mortal if forgiveness is asked for it. Ibn Hanbal records the tradition from Abū Dharr that the Messenger of Allah said, "Verily, Allah Most High will assuredly forgive His servant as long as there is not a veil between." He was asked what the veil was, and replied, "That a soul passes away while associating something with Allah."<sup>1</sup> The forgiveness of grave sins "even adultery and theft" is also taught in the Traditions.<sup>2</sup> For Muslims who have committed grave sins there is always the intercession of the Prophet to be hoped for. Some think that good deeds may atone for little sins, but that mortal sins can only be dealt with by a direct act of forgiveness which may be with or without repentance at the pleasure of Allah. For polytheism or associating another with God there may be forgiveness, if God wills, but repentance is necessary.

In regard to the motive of sin there is very little ambiguity in the Qur'ān. The root of sin is self-will and pride. The great sinners of the Qur'ān such as Thamūd, Pharaoh, Hāmān and Satan are arrogant and set themselves up against God. "And when we said to the angels, 'Adore Adam', they adored him save only Iblis, who refused and was too proud and became one of the misbelievers" (Sura ii. 32). "I will show you the dwelling of those who work abominations; I will turn from my signs those who are big with pride in the earth without right; and if they see every sign they shall not believe therein, and if they see the path of rectitude they shall not take it for a path; but if they see the path of error they shall take it for a path" (Sura vii. 143-4).<sup>3</sup> The contrast of the sinner and the righteous in Sura lxx. 19-35 is very instructive. The roots of evil are in hastiness, in impatience, and in eager grasping and niggardliness, while the good man is the one who looks to the judgment of his deeds, is prayerful and given to charity, controls his lust, and is true to his trust. The diagnosis is true, and in close relation both with the higher teaching of the Old Testament and with the condemnations which our Lord uttered on those who, even in the practice of religion, set themselves up in hypocritical pride. To set in opposition *amor sui* and *amor Dei* is to point to the very root of sin,<sup>4</sup> if only in the Qur'ān there were more of the love of

<sup>1</sup> *Musnad*, vi. 240.

<sup>2</sup> *Muslim*: *Imān*, Trad. 153.

<sup>3</sup> See also Suras xxxviii. 71-77; xxviii. 39 and vii. 73-74.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Augustine on St. John's Gospel, *Tract. cxxiiii. 5*.

God. But to indicate the root of sin is not equivalent to rooting out sin. The beginning of wisdom is there, because the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, but the end of wisdom is love, and that which weans man from self-love to love of God is the real cure for sin.

In the section on man something has been said about original sin. One or two additional points worthy of note are that Al Jubbā'i is said to have taught "blame without sin" which Wensinck considers may have been derived from John of Damascus.<sup>1</sup> It might be said that if the soul is urgent to evil (Sura xii. 53) this might be due to hereditary bias. On the other hand, the idea that each human soul is, as it were, a *tabula rasa* is predominant.

#### (II) FAITH AND WORKS

There is evidence of fairly wide discussion of the question of faith and works in the earliest Muslim period. The subject appears in many traditions. Wensinck has dealt with it in a manner which leaves nothing to be desired and very little to add. The definition of religion as consisting in both faith and good works goes back to the Christian Scriptures at least. The relation of the two was and still is a matter for searching discussion. Some people think that early in the Christian era there were two parties with one supporting legalism (the Judaizers) and the other supporting the opposite view. Whether there were two such parties or not, and we think not, there was nevertheless room for development of ideas on the subject and naturally a good deal of expression of opinion. We have an early development of the idea that good works and faith are co-ordinate as the condition of salvation, and whatever emphasis was put upon the need of faith there was equal concern to state that faith without works is dead. Cyril of Jerusalem says, "The way of godliness consists in two things, in pious doctrine and in virtuous practices."<sup>2</sup> This was not inconsistent with the doctrine of justification by faith. Clement of Rome could assert that justification was by faith and not by purification,<sup>3</sup> and could yet affirm in the same epistle that Abraham was faithful as rendering obedience.<sup>4</sup> If we ask why there should be alternation of ideas in respect to faith and works, the reply may be that when immorality prevails it is necessary to take a stand for the law, which will bring home the evil of sin to those who, without its rigours, would be careless and heedless; and when pride in the perfect performance of law threatens true morality because it results in self-glorification, and threatens religion because it weakens dependence on God, it is necessary to proclaim the impotence of law to restore us wholly to fellowship with God.

<sup>1</sup> *Muslim Creed*, p. 137.

<sup>2</sup> *Cat.* iv. 2.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xxxii. 4.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. x. 1 f.

Islam seeks to restore the sense of dependence upon God by magnification of the greatness of God and by the inculcation of awe, whereas Christ seeks to bring men to God by the way of love. Thus faith and works find a new orientation in Christianity. Faith awakened by love has its fruits in righteousness.

The following will illustrate the particular trend of Islamic thought with regard to the subject of faith and works. Firstly, the faith which is in question is belief rather than trust, an adhesion of the mind and heart to certain truths rather than a loving confidence. A key passage in the Qur'an is, " Righteousness is not that ye turn your faces towards the east or the west, but righteousness is, one who believes in God, and the last day, and the angels, and the Book, and the prophets, and who gives wealth for love of Him to kindred and orphans, and the poor, and the son of the road (traveller), and beggars, and those in captivity ; and who is steadfast in prayer, and gives alms ; and those who are trusty in their covenant when they make a covenant ; and the patient in poverty, and distress, and in time of violence ; these are they who are true, and these are those who fear."<sup>1</sup> In such a statement there is much that is admirable, and it is not so much what it contains as what it omits that is subject to criticism. A sound belief and a moral code are so much gain, but the absence of that which binds man to God in loving trust is a dire loss.

There are set before us in the passage quoted two main ideas, faith and works. Suppose a man to have the belief outlined and to fall short in obedience to the moral precepts mentioned. What then is the position ? For the acceptance of the articles of a creed, or the acceptance of Islam is a man then assured of salvation ? Lingering in the background is the idea of the utter freedom of God to do what He will, and that being unpredictable all that can be said is conjectural and relative to something unknown. But with this proviso what could be said ? The Puritans of early Islam, the Khārijites, proclaimed unequivocally that faith and works were equally required of Muslims and that a man who accepted the belief and failed morally was outside the pale. Even traditions are to be found pointing in this direction. " The one who commits fornication is not a believer at the same time nor is he who steals or drinks wine."<sup>2</sup> Wāsil and 'Umar agreed with the Khārijites that one who commits great sins should be punished with Hell, but they hesitated to call such a man an infidel.<sup>3</sup> Nazzām agreed that faith was the avoidance of great sins.<sup>4</sup> Faith is not words and outward acts, and the mere performance of prayer is not necessarily faith nor derived from faith. This points to the possibility of men being

<sup>1</sup> Sura ii. 172. Bell translates " though they love their wealth give," and not "for love of Him."

<sup>2</sup> Muslim : *Imān*, Trad. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Baghdādī : *Faqīh*, Pt. III, iii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid. loc. cit.* Nazzām's nineteenth heresy.

dissemblers (*munāfiqūn*) which was apparently common in the early days when the Muslim conquest was in full swing and men outwardly accepted the new religion. But it was important to know whether men were really Muslims. In the new society, to be a Muslim made all the difference. How could one judge except by the outward appearance? Thus the orthodox accepted the outward marks. But was a good moral life to be reckoned among those marks? Who could decide this? Again the trend was away from the rigorist interpretation and sinful actions were not regarded as alienating men from the Muslim brotherhood. There is a tradition to the effect that Muhammad went even further than this and held out the hope that men who accepted the Unity of Allah would go to heaven and for that alone, but that he was deterred by 'Umar from announcing such a thing. The tradition describes how Abū Huraira was instructed by the Prophet, "Whoever meets thee behind this wall and testifies that there is no god but Allah, affirming it with his heart, give that one the good news of heaven." He did as he was instructed and met 'Umar, who struck him and led him to the Prophet and said, "Didst thou send Abū Huraira with thy shoes to inform whomsoever he met who testified from the heart that there is no god but Allah, that there is given him the good news of heaven?" "Yes," said the Prophet. 'Umar said, "Then do not act in this way; for I am afraid that men will rely on this alone. So let them perform good works." On this the Messenger of Allah said, "Let them do so."<sup>1</sup>

One point in the discussion was as to the difference between faith and Islam. Some thought that faith and works together constituted Islam and others considered that "Islam was external and faith was of the heart".<sup>2</sup> The definition of faith varied. Jahm said that faith is simply knowledge of God, and unbelief is ignorance of Him.<sup>3</sup> Baghdādī says that Abū Mukarram also held that ignorance constitutes unbelief. The Murjites said that faith was merely verbal confession,<sup>4</sup> according to Baghdādī, but one may be permitted to question whether this adequately represents their view. They were the people who refused to judge whether a man was an infidel or of the faith and left this to the judgment of Allah. In such circumstances, because they had not been able to "split the heart" of any man who professed faith to see whether there was faith there (which was the substance of the rebuke of the prophet when men had been put to death because there was a prevalent opinion that they were not true Muslims), they could do nothing more than rely upon the outward confession of the faith. So far as that goes, faith was for them most important in respect to the

<sup>1</sup> *Mishkāt : Kitāb u'l Imān.*

<sup>2</sup> Compare Muslim : *Imān*, Trad. 5 with *Musnad* of Ibn Hanbal iii. 134 f. which respectively represent the different views. See also Wensinck : *Muslim Creed*, 12 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Baghdādī : *Farq*, Pt. III, Cap. vi.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* Pt. III, Cap. iii.

final judgment. They held that then it would be faith which would count more than anything else. If they held the view that faith was only verbal confession, they could hardly have attached such importance to faith on the day of judgment ; and they are reputed to have believed in the indelible character of faith, which could hardly be the case if faith was for them only a formula. Al Ash'arī makes it plain<sup>1</sup> that there were various types of Murjites. Some held that faith in Allah is knowledge of Him and His Messenger and in all that comes from Allah, some that faith is simply knowledge of Allah and nothing else, others that faith is knowledge (*ma'rifa*) of Allah and humility before Him : Satan, in spite of knowing Allah, was still an infidel because he did not humble himself before Allah (cf. "The devils believe and tremble"). Others, again, said that without support of the prophets faith was knowledge of Allah, humility before Him, love for Him in the heart and the confession that He is one and there is none like Him ; but with support of prophets faith includes confession of them and belief in them. He gives many more besides, but these are sufficient to illustrate the widely differing views on faith which were attributed to those who for various reasons are held to belong to this school. There were other views attributed to various Mu'tazilites. One particularly interesting is that ascribed to Abū Hudhayl<sup>2</sup> who is reported to have believed that works take their quality from faith. Unintentional obedience was not to be counted for righteousness. Intelligent acceptance of obligation is also implied when we are told that Sālīt b. 'Uthmān held that the children of a convert were not accepted as Muslims according to the view of his school until they became of age and accepted Islam after being invited to it.<sup>3</sup> It was also held by some that faith was not subject to increase and decrease, e.g., Ghassān, but works were subject to increase and decrease. Abū Shimr held that faith is a knowledge and confession of God and of whatever comes down from Him concerning which there is agreement in the Community, as, for instance, prayer, alms, fasting, pilgrimage, prohibition of eating carrion and blood, the flesh of swine, incest and the rest and also a confession of '*adl wa tawhīd*', i.e., justice and unity *ta'*<sup>4</sup>, the special tenets of the Mu'tazila. Al Ash'arī<sup>4</sup> says that Ghaylān held faith to be secondary knowledge (*ma'rifa*) of God, not primary knowledge which is innate. These miscellaneous examples will serve to give an idea of the different views expressed.

Some dissatisfaction with a merely intellectualist conception of faith as only the knowledge or apprehension of God may perhaps be discerned in the view attributed to Hafṣ b. Abī'l Miqdām,<sup>5</sup> namely,

Al Ash'arī : *Maqālāt*, i. pp. 132 ff.

Baghdādī : *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. ii.

*Ibid.*, loc. cit.

*Maqālāt*, i. 136.

Baghdādī : *Farg*, Pt. III, Cap. ii.

that mere knowledge of Allah was half-way between polytheism and belief. The one who knew Allah but disbelieved in the Prophet, Paradise and Hell and the prohibitions (*harām* and *halāl*), e.g., in respect to suicide and permitting adultery, is an unbeliever, but is free from polytheism. But if a man is ignorant of Allah and denies Him, then he is a polytheist as well as an unbeliever.

To sum up general results : faith (*īmān*) is belief (*taṣdīq*) which is intellectual assent. *Islām* means submission, humility before God, obedience to Him. *Īmān* must be exercised with heart, mind and tongue, being knowledge, sincerity and confession. *Islām* includes faith and is in addition the practices enjoined. The two may be regarded in some respects as synonymous ('ala sabīli 't-tarādi fi wa't-tawāridi), and distinguished for other purposes ('ala sabīli 'l-ikhtilāfi), and sometimes as mutually inclusive ('ala sabīli 't-tadākhuli). Faith is sometimes strong and sometimes weak in relation to the conviction of the truth or in relation to the obedience which it awakens. *Kufr* is the negation of faith and Islam. *Bid'a* is heresy and is not necessarily a negation amounting to *Kufr*. A Muslim cannot become a *kāfir* or infidel simply by being wicked. He does so by denying God, or the Prophet, or by polytheism, or by cutting himself off from the community's general consent with regard to the essential practices. This is a brief summary of the orthodox position.

The ground for the discussion of the relation of faith to works was prepared in the Christian environment, to the influence of which much of this discussion may be referred. If we take the doctrine of Theodore of Mopsuestia, as revealed in the *Synopsis* preserved in the Syrian church to which we have previously given some attention, the connexion will be obvious without needless commentary. We find in this *Synopsis* the question, "What is Christianity and of what does it consist ? Of works or of faith ? If "of works" then what works ? Are they chastity, holiness, asceticism, fasting, prayer, etc. ?" Part of the answer given to this is, "Christianity does not consist solely of good works, but of the knowledge of God. It consists of a solid faith and of good and pious works." The next question is about those people who perpetrate sinful acts, are obscene in speech, and have evil thoughts, and yet have a knowledge of God which is not inferior to that of their faithful brethren. Theodore answers this by saying that after purgation according to the measure of their evil, "They will live again for the sake of the honour of the faith." This is like the opinion expressed by the orthodox Muslims and some others, that if Muslims go to Hell, they will be at last brought forth purified. The final question which Theodore records is about those who hold the true faith and yet resort to astrologers, sorcerers and the like. The answer given is, "They profess to know God but in their works they deny Him." If they die in their evil practices, they will not go to

Heaven but will be sent to torment. This is very interesting because it gives the sort of emphasis which enabled Muslims to put in the forefront of the deadly sins the sin of sorcery. It is quite clear that this was regarded as forsaking the true faith, whereas the sins of the flesh were thought to be capable of purgation even after this life, so long as the faith was not forsaken.

### (III) SALVATION

We have previously remarked that in the period under review, at least in the East, there was on the Christian side some obscuration of the doctrines of grace, and a tendency to substitute the faith of assent for the faith of trust, and in certain theologians a temptation to substitute an intellectualism for the simplicity of the things "revealed unto babes" which resulted in a mystification rather than a "mystery revealed". The tendencies are observable at a very early date in Philo to whom religion seems to mean primarily the emancipation of intellect from the dominion of sense. In such a scheme knowledge is esteemed more than faith. Both Origen and Clement err to a certain extent in this respect. There was an over-optimistic confidence in the power of human intellect. The wise man had the means in his power to solve all problems, and to achieve results which inferior minds could only expect as the result of the record of revelation, given in the first place to the elect who were gifted with immediate intuition of the truth. In such a system what room is there for forgiveness, what meaning has it in such a group of ideas and what place is there for vicarious suffering? The incarnation and the resurrection are of primary importance. Man is made one with God because humanity and divinity are made one in Christ. In Clement of Alexandria we find the typical statement, "He who is God became man that we might become gods."<sup>1</sup> In Antioch the resurrection of Christ means the emancipation of man from mortality and finitude. The work of Christ was to show the development of humanity in its completeness. The aftermath of this is the conception of the ideal man as we see in the ascent to Prophethood in Ibn Miskawaih. A mystical identity with the ideal man was equivalent to salvation. Individuals were joined to Christ by baptism accompanied by faith and repentance. By partaking of the supernatural meal they identified themselves with Christ and their souls and bodies were renewed. Now it is not that these ideas are errors, but that there is a wrong emphasis. In the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ is the commemoration of a sacrifice necessitated by sin and not merely a participation in a holy league of the purified. Briefly and without the essential qualifications, in the Greek fathers redemption tends to become solely union with

<sup>1</sup> *Protrep.*, i. 8 (refers to Jno. x. 24).

God and the unity is a sort of deification.<sup>1</sup> Christ came into humanity like a Greek *sōiér* to make it safe from its enemies, death and corruption.<sup>2</sup> The line of thought is very early and may be traced in Justin and in Irenaeus. Atonement is expressed as, “*Deus hominis antiquam plasmationem in se recapitulans, ut occideret quidem peccatum, evacuaret autem mortem et vivificaret hominem*”,<sup>3</sup> God brings all men together in Christ their Head. And we may here note that the idea of salvation by community passes over into Islam in another context. Sometimes the intellectualist conception is expressed in terms of illumination. Clement likens regeneration to the removal of cataract so that the eyes are opened to receive the light. Thus ideas of human guilt and responsibility are in the background, and communion with God is not primarily the grace of God towards sinful men but the achievement of a purification. The initiative towards this purification tends to be ascribed to man, and “there is an absence of a serious conception of the atoning death of Christ”.<sup>4</sup> The process of purification may be longer or shorter and may continue after death.

“Only Gregory of Nazianzus<sup>5</sup> has more than a crude conception of the atonement.” Clement of Alexandria even went so far as to say that the death of Christ was not purposed by God. What should be said about it is that God did not prevent it. Having regard to the unity in the Blessed Trinity we might then say that if God did not intend it neither did Christ. For if the Father did not intend it and the Son did, what becomes of the Unity? If Christ did not intend it, what becomes of the voluntary sacrifice of Christ? How can one explain, “For this cause came I unto this hour” (John xii. 27) and “I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto myself” (John xii. 32)? It should be remarked that this question of whether Christ died voluntarily assumes a first-class importance, and is often brought forward by Muslims, as we have already seen. Theodore of Mopsuestia in the *Synopsis* says, “He died by God’s tacit permission, which preserves the freewill of man”, and except for this question of the freewill of Christ, he seems to have nothing to say.

When we turn to Islam it is difficult to frame any doctrine of salvation. Such matters as the Forgiveness of God, His Grace and Favour, His Guidance and Predestination, which we have dealt with at some length under these headings, must be taken into consideration when we try to understand the Muslim position. There is only one single reference to salvation in the Qur’ān by the name which has become common in later Islam, i.e., *najāt*, namely in Sura xl. 44, “O my people how is it that I bid you to salvation but that ye bid me to the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Athan. *Incarn.*, 54. Possibly 2 Pet. i. 4 is in mind.

<sup>2</sup> Athanasius : *Orat. Adv. Arianos*, ii. 66 f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Irenaeus : *Adv. Haer.* iv. 6, 2; iii. 16, 6; 18, 1 and 7; v. 14, 2; 19, 1, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Dorner : *Person of Christ*, II, i. 51.

<sup>5</sup> *Orat.*, xlvi. 22.

Fire ? ” This gives an important clue, and it is strengthened by the question which starts the discussion about the faith and practices of Islam in the early traditions, “ What can bring me to Paradise and keep me away from Hell ? ”<sup>1</sup> Salvation is contrasted with Hell and is primarily concerned with the escape from Hell. It is not conceivable in any other way but as accomplished at some future date when the Divine fiat shall be declared in accordance with the eternal decrees, when the record of man’s life is complete and the world has come to an end. Everything, therefore, depends on the will of God, and the one who accepts Islam and acts according to the five obligations can paradoxically claim in some sense to be in a state of salvation, while at the same time he cannot say whether he will be saved. This will make it obvious that to import Christian ideas of a present salvation into Islam only results in confusion.

Then what is Islam ? It is the interim state of the theocracy with which men should become associated and from which they remain separate at their peril. Though not in itself salvation Islam is the means of salvation ; through it man takes upon himself the burden (*taklīf*) to observe a way of life which is consonant with the expectation of the mercy of God. He is a prudent man if he does this because by it he is able to avail himself of certain facilities which have been offered to man by God. These facilities, the whole sum of them : prophet, book, angels, ordinances, are a mercy from God which he spurns at his peril. Whatever his idea may be about the uncertain decree in his particular case, he shares with all Muslims the hope that a peculiar efficacy may attach to the fulfilling of his obligation. At one time he is told that all men will go to Hell,<sup>2</sup> and at another he is led to expect the pleasures of Paradise,<sup>3</sup> and he is specifically bidden never to despair of the mercy of God, a necessary injunction in view of the inscrutable decree.

As the preparatory theocracy Islam is the primary means to the Muslim’s salvation rather than salvation itself. Until there is release from *taklīf* how can he think otherwise ? Thus the first point we should notice is that in Islam salvation is by identification with a community. This is a concrete conception which has a firm hold on the Muslim heart. In the answer to the question how to escape from Hell, the answer might be of “ faith and works ” and this might suggest further questions, but the whole answer was “ Islam ”, the Islam which he saw about him, the tangible and concrete community in the common agreement of which he saw the practice of the Prophet, and was presented with the authoritative Book. This could cut for him the knot of many a dilemma. The only thing which barred him from Islam

<sup>1</sup> Muslim : *Imān*, Trad. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Sura xix. 72, “ There is not one of you that shall not go down to it.”

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Sura lxxvi. 12–22, etc.

was *kufr* and *kufr* was polytheism ; he might be a heretic, i.e., guilty of *bid'a* or innovation, but had not the prophet said that Islam would be divided into seventy-three sects, and that only one would be saved ?<sup>1</sup> Which that one might be, which could rightly claim to be the one that the Prophet and his Companions followed, might also be a matter of doubt ; but to forsake polytheism and to conform to the community in all the externals of religion was clear and simple, and afforded him at least a chance of belonging to the saved sect. The community was sacred and there was the deepest concern to keep it united. Traditions are numerous wherein the Prophet exhorts his followers to unity. He asserts that his community will never agree in error.<sup>2</sup> And he warns those who would break its unity<sup>3</sup> of the punishment for such an act. Even when the four schools of Law seemed to threaten the unity their differences were merged in the larger unity so that perplexity should not descend upon the people. And thus a man might be a Mālikite, a Hanafite, and Shāfi'ite or a Hanbalite and feel no qualms for a breach of the orthodox unity of Islam. Thus primarily, the institution of the community of Islam, enshrining within it the practice of the Prophet, possessed of the authoritative code of God in the Qur'ān, presenting a concrete and external unity, composed of members rejoicing in a special divine election, the interim stage of the theocracy, never to be superseded, endowed with an inerrancy in spite of apparent differences, is the first means of salvation and all that follows must be within this framework.

As a contribution to the unity of assent in the community, the right assent could be a matter of inquiry, and as such, and especially as faith was associated with works in the definition of Islam, and was presupposed in the acceptance of Islam, soon loomed large in the young community. It will be noticed that it is always taken for granted that faith is necessary for salvation. The only question which arises in this connexion is about works. No one suggested that a man might be saved by works without faith, at any rate in a way to excite attention. If Jews and Christians were thought to have a chance of salvation it was because of the measure of faith which they might possess which would prepare them for the final acceptance of Islam in the last days. But the second point is as to the soundness of the faith professed. To do what was done with the schools of law would have been to court disaster and create chaos, though students of the history will find that to declare a man an infidel simply on account of belief was not so common as to excommunicate a man for endangering the unity of the community. As an instance of this we may point to the initial irreconcilable antagonism between Authority (*Naql*) and Reason

<sup>1</sup> Tirmidhi : *Imān*, 18, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., *Fitan*, 7.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Muslim : *Imāra*, Trad. 59, 60

(*Aql*). In the early days the exponents of *Kalām* or dialectic were anathematized by the traditionalists (*muḥaddithūn*) and stigmatized as Mu'tazilite or schismatic, but gradually the terminology and the method of *Kalām* is adopted into Islam in its orthodox exposition, as we shall see in a later part of this work. At first the Sufis were considered to be a menace to the community, and it would seem that the primary motive in the crucifixion of Mansūr al Ḥallāj was more political than creedal, although the ostensible reason was his utterance of the ecstatic words *Ana'l Haqq*, "I am creative Truth". But in a comparatively short time, with the genius of Junayd, and the winning of popularity for mystical ideas, Al Ghazzālī is able to unite his Sufistic principles freely with orthodox traditionalism. Another illustration is, that though the code of Islam is in most respects the most rigid and uniform and the prescriptions are stereotyped in *Fiqh*, even in this early age there is the assimilation of Greek philosophical ethical theory and its development in relation to Islam, notably in the monumental work of Ibn Miskawaih, *Tahdhīb ul Akhlāq* and Al Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā 'Ulum id Dīn*. The result is that at last, bound up with the traditional duties (*farā'id*), we have the *Akhlaq* or ethics founded on Aristotle's, with its vices of the concupiscent and irascible powers and its virtues of the same. Thus there was change not only in the way that things were said, but also development in belief, and as the community assimilated the new, its first interest was the preservation of its unity; and it has accepted new syntheses in self-preservation always with the profound conviction of its status as the interim stage of the theocracy, while rigidly holding its outward marks, so that at the last it may be a people "summoned at the Last Day with foreheads, arms and feet shining with the effects of *wudū'* (i.e., the ritual ablution)"<sup>1</sup>. The changes in respect to even the most central articles of faith, an illustration of which is the difference between the *Tawhīd* of the simple declaration in the *kalima* and the exposition of this by the exponents of the doctrine of *Wahdat ul Wujūd*, i.e., the Unity of all existence, could be tolerated so long as the formal and external unity was not imperilled.

We find the same represented in the gradual growth of the principle of *tariqa* among the mystically minded. In principle the duties laid down for all are the instruments of salvation, but very early the door is opened to works of supererogation, and this is further extended in the discipline of the mystic path (*silk*) so that, so long as men did not forsake the *sharī'a* or think to render it void, practices which had no connexion with original Islam could be regarded as the marks of holiness. And lastly, the unity of the community is vested in the Prophet, who, though he is not a saviour in the Christian sense, is the head and representative of the elect community, and himself elect

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Muslim : *Tahāra*, Tradd. 34-40.

to special offices on behalf of it. It is in relation to *Muhammad* that the Muslim realizes what the Christian Father speaks of in his "*in semetipsum recapitulans*". He is the Seal of the Prophets and the chosen of God. After all works have ceased there is still the Prophet's intercession, the final act before the consummation of the community's entrance into Paradise.

The doctrine of intercession has plainly grown up to offset the depressing effect of the doctrine of *qadar*. It provides a last hope to uneasy minds. It brings in an alien doctrine of a saviour through the very pressure of sinful human need. It is extremely doubtful whether the doctrine can be supported by reference to the Qur'an, though the traditions are full of it. The Qur'an teaches, "They worship beside Allah that which cannot hurt or help them and say: These are our advocates with Allah." "Fear a day in which a soul shall not avail for a soul at all, nor shall any intercession be accepted from them, nor shall any ransom be taken, nor any help afforded them." And in Sura xxxix. 45 intercession is limited to Allah Himself. Sometimes Suras xvii. 81, "Thy Lord will raise thee (*Muhammad*) to a laudable station" and xciii. 5, "And in the end thy Lord will give thee", have been advanced in support of the intercession of the Prophet on the Last Day. Other passages where intercession is specially mentioned do not affirm this of the Prophet, e.g., Suras xl. 7; xxi. 28 f.; xix. 90; xlvi. 86, and ii. 256. Nevertheless these have been enlarged in the *Hadīth* which unequivocally ascribes the office to *Muhammad*. "My intercession shall be on behalf of those of my community who have committed mortal sins."<sup>1</sup> But *Hadīth* gives the office of intercession to all the prophets,<sup>2</sup> to martyrs,<sup>3</sup> and to Muslims in general.<sup>4</sup> Intercession in the Islamic sense is like advocacy in a court, while in the Christian sense it is part of the sympathy which is displayed in part by the suffering of Christ and is integral to the character of God (Rom. viii. 26).

#### (IV) LAST THINGS

A complete record of all that is taught about the eschatology of Islam would fill a volume. In reviewing the Christian elements in the Qur'an and Tradition in the early part of this book we have had occasion to refer to certain matters which there is no need to repeat here.

At the hour of death the angel of death ('Izrā'il) seizes the soul in the throat of the dying person.<sup>5</sup> In the grave he is visited by the fearful Munkar and Nakir, two angels who subject him to an inquiry about his faith. He is liable to punishment in the grave. For this it is necessary

<sup>1</sup> Abū Da'ūd: *Sunna*, bāb 20 (in his *Sunan*).

<sup>2</sup> Bukhārī: *Sahīh*, Tawhīd, bāb 2.

<sup>3</sup> Tirmidhī: *Fadā'il ul Jihād*, bāb 14.

<sup>4</sup> Bukhārī: *Tawhīd*, bāb 24.

<sup>5</sup> Sura xxxii. 11.

for the soul to return to the body, but its proper place after death is the intermediate state (*Barzakh*, cf. Hades). There he stays till the judgment. An exception is made for some who proceed directly to Paradise. The souls of martyrs are in the crops of green birds who find their food in Paradise.<sup>1</sup> Prophets apparently go in their own person.

Signs of the approach of the Last Day are : declining faith in the world ; usurpation of high place by the unworthy ; increase of immorality ; seditions, war with Greeks and Romans ; famine and plague and all sorts of afflictions in the world ; the coming of Anti-Christ (*Dajjāl*) ; the second advent of Jesus, who will slay Anti-Christ, pray the ritual prayer as Muhammad taught it and break the cross ; a period of happiness and prosperity succeeding the coming of Jesus ; the coming of the Beast (*Dābbā*) ; seven years harrowing by Gog and Magog ;<sup>2</sup> the rising of the sun in the west ; the destruction of the Ka'aba ; the disappearance of the Qur'an from writing and memory ; a universal apostasy. There is much more in Muslim apocalyptic tradition. There will be two blasts on the trumpet between which there will be an interval of forty years. During this time all will remain in the intermediate state. On the second blast of the trumpet men will receive their bodies again and assemble for the judgment. God will come in the clouds and the angels with him. All men will appear before Him, the books will be opened and men will have to give answers to the questions put to them, their record or account will be made up, and their deeds will be weighed in the Balances. The sentence will then be pronounced and believers and unbelievers alike will have to traverse the hair-like bridge of *Sirāt* across the gulf of Hell. Such is a brief account of the externals which need not detain us here.

Various opinions were expressed about the end of the world in the early discussions on the subject. Abū Hudhayl was of the opinion that the world will only pass away when those who are obedient to the law disappear, the reason for this being that the world was only made in order that men should have the opportunity to obey the law of God. There is a very persistent belief in the coming of Christ (cf. Sura xlvi. 61). It persists among Sunnis and Shi'ites alike. It is said that at His second coming He will marry and die and be buried. His special task will be to convert the People of the Book to Islam. Among Shi'ites there is also a strange idea of two judgments. There will be a judgment on a great company of men in "the time of His Excellency the Qāyim" who have been either very good or very evil and they will return to the earth. The evil will return for retribution and affliction. Others will remain in their graves until the final

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sura iii. 163, and Muslim : *Imāra*, 121, etc;

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. XX, Cap. xi.

resurrection.”<sup>1</sup> There is also another peculiar view of two deaths. A believer who has died a natural death will be killed at the time of the return, and the one who suffered a death by violence will die naturally.<sup>2</sup> This points to a sort of millenarianism.

The Qadarites naturally protested against any idea that the judgment should simply be the issuing of the divine fiat. Nazzām said that it was impossible for God to abate one whit of the bliss of Paradise, because this was the due of those who were rewarded; neither can He alleviate the pangs of Hell in the slightest degree. Such a statement is not surprising, but it will be noted that the orthodox are just as much concerned to assert the righteousness of the judgment as the Qadarites, otherwise there is no meaning in the questioning, the taking of the account and the weighing of deeds. Nevertheless the difficulty must remain. How is it possible to reconcile the statement of Ibn ‘Abbās that God if He pleases, can forgive great sins, and if He pleases punish small ones, with the idea of a judgment according to works? Probably the sentence pronounced is taken to have more in it than a formal declaration of the result of the weighing, and it is in this that the eternal will is known. There was also in Nazzām’s view a sense of the intimate relation of retribution to acts. For instance, he expressed the idea that a child might be on the brink of Hell and God could not push him in, but he could jump in himself. Jāhīz has also the same heretical idea expressed in another way. He said that Allah does not send anyone to Hell but Hell attracts people by its very nature and evermore holds them in its grasp. Baghdādi says with disapproval that this would mean that Paradise attracts people by its nature, and that Allah does not send anyone to Paradise. This was probably exactly what Jāhīz thought, and it means that there is nothing arbitrary in punishment but that sin and retribution, goodness and reward are bound up together. This reproduces the Christian thought from the very earliest times and it is behind the statement of Origen that punishment is not God’s work but the natural consequence of sin.

Related to this question of the justice of the judgment, is the one which was much argued as to the state of children. First of all there was the question as to whether children could be Muslims. The usual answer was that this depended on their age. Some said that the children of Muslims could be counted as Muslims. Others declared that children of polytheists and Muslims could not be regarded as either friends or foes till maturity. The ‘Ajāridites considered a child exempt from such question till puberty, when he should be called to embrace Islam. Tha’labā the Khārijite said that Muslims remained responsible for their children till it was clear that they were determined

<sup>1</sup> Majlisī: *Hagg ul Yaqīn*, 160. Cf. *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. XX, Capp. vi and vii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, *Bahr ul Anwār*, xiii. 336.

to apostasize. With regard to the children of infidels some distinction was made. The tradition often quoted is related from Ayesha, who asked the Prophet concerning the fate of children of believers. "He replied, 'They are as their fathers.' I said 'O Messenger of Allah, without works?' He answered, 'God knows best what they would have done.' I said, 'What then of the children of polytheists?' He answered in the same way".<sup>1</sup> This was non-committal, but there are other traditions which assert that the children of polytheists are in Hell, and there is one recorded from 'Ali by Ibn Hanbal in which the prophet said that Khadija's two children who had died in the time of ignorance were in Hell.<sup>2</sup> In line with this we find that Salt b. Uthmān said that the children of people who were converted to Islam were not accepted *ipso facto* as Muslims but were invited to embrace Islam when they came of age. Nawawī says there were three opinions with regard to the children of infidels. The majority of the doctors were of the opinion that they would go to Hell, others were neutral, and the third party held they were in Paradise. This last Nawawī holds to be the correct view, and he supports it by Sura xvii. 16. Generally speaking Qadarites believed such children to be in Paradise, and Khārijites took the opposite view.<sup>3</sup> Some of the latter thought they were neither in Hell nor in Paradise, almost similar to the idea of Limbo.<sup>4</sup> The idea expressed by early Christian writers is that children who are not baptized do not participate in the beatific vision because they are not purged of original sin. In the early Church there were various views on the matter. The two Gregories and Basil of Cæsarea and Chrysostom said that new-born babes were free from sin. It was corruption which was entailed from the first parent and not guilt, and presumably because there was no time for corruption to work in infants of tender years they were not to be regarded as sinners. Augustine believed that unbaptized children are in Limbo. In the *Synopsis*, Theodore of Mopsuestia replies to the question thus. "The babes who are baptized in the Divine sacrament of our Lord are in Heaven, and those who are not baptized through the negligence of their parents also go to Heaven, because it was not their own fault. . . . They are not, however, as honourable as those who have the mark of the holy sacrament. . . . As to the children of infidels who leave the world in infancy without doing anything good or bad . . . these also are in Heaven because they have committed no sins . . . and they are in an intermediary state. They will not be tormented nor debarred from Heaven . . . and so God will be in nowise unjust to them."<sup>5</sup>

The conditions of the hereafter, both Hell and Heaven are described

<sup>1</sup> *Sunan of Abū Dā'ud, Sunna, bāb 17.*

<sup>2</sup> *Musnad* : i. 133 f. contradicts this, but see *Mishkāt : Imān on Qadar*.

<sup>3</sup> See *Baḡdādī* : *Faq̄, Pt. III, Capp. ii and iii, passim.*

<sup>4</sup> See Wensinck : *Muslim Creed*, p. 44 quoting *Catholic Encyc. art. Limbo.*

<sup>5</sup> Mingana : *Synopsis*, p. 16 f.

in elaborate imagery. Reference may be made to Suras xxxvii. 60–64; xliv. 43–44; lvi. 51–53; xiv. 19, and xxxviii. 57 for the torments of the damned and to lxxvi. 12–22; xxxviii. 49–55; lxxxiii. 22–36; xxxvii. 39–59; lvi. 12–39; ii. 23; iv. 60; lv. 45–78, amplified by numerous traditions, for the voluptuous delights of Paradise. “The fellows of Paradise upon that day shall be employed in enjoyment; they and their wives, in shade upon thrones reclining; therein shall they have fruits, and they shall have what they may call for” (Sura xxxvi. 55). Whether the gorgeous imagery is to be taken as meaning sensual delights or not, the usual interpretation is literal. We read, however, of those who protested against such views, and Hishām b. ‘Amr ul Fawaṭī denied the marriage of the virgins in Paradise. Some of the Mu’tazilites denied that heaven and hell exist at all and asserted that they would only be created at the last, and this is recorded of Hishām.<sup>1</sup> The generally accepted view about the last abode of the faithful is that it is a place where no one shall call them to account and they can do as they like. It is recorded, however, of Abū Hudhayl, and said to be a heresy of his, that there is no “freedom” in the next world or else responsibility and obligation would be involved.<sup>2</sup> This looks rather like a caricature of the view that one will shall prevail by the free acceptance of all who enter into the communion of the blest. At any rate Abū Hudhayl agrees that *taklif* must come to an end, which means that the probationary period is past and God’s will will be done without the burden of *taklif*.

Is the punishment of Hell to be regarded as eternal? In Sura lxxviii. 23 we read, “Verily Hell is an ambuscade; a reward for the outrageous, to tarry therein for ages.” Some would see in the use of *ahgāban* in this passage, which is translated by Palmer as “for ages” a hope that the punishment of Hell will not be eternal. But this is not the only passage which speaks of the duration of Hell. There are Suras x. 53; xxxii. 14, and xli. 28 where the same word is used as that which is applied to the pleasures of Paradise, and so if this, too, is to mean “for a long time”, then the pleasures of Paradise must be thought to last for a long time only, and not for eternity. Some, indeed, must have accepted this, for we are told that Jahm held that Heaven and Hell would cease to exist. Abū Hudhayl held that the preordination of Allah could cease, so that He would be no longer *Qādir*. In proof of this he advanced the view that the bliss of Paradise and the pangs of Hell would cease. He held that infinity was impossible in created things. “Just as there is a beginning at the first which is not preceded by anything else, so there must be an event at the end beyond which there is no succeeding event.” Not only the Mu’tazilites but the Murjites also hesitated on the point of the eternity of punishment.

<sup>1</sup> Baghdādī: *Farg*, III, iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

The latter specially felt that at least the wicked of the *Ahl ul Qibla* could not remain in the fire for ever.<sup>1</sup>

Thumāma was accused of holding that the Jews and Christians would be annihilated, but according to the *Intisār* this is incorrect.<sup>2</sup> He is also said to have held the opinion that there were some people so ignorant that no obligation was imposed on them at all, and the command to believe and prohibition from unbelief did not apply to them. They were no better than beasts of burden and when they had served their turn they would be annihilated. He also held that a child who died without meriting either reward or punishment would be annihilated.<sup>3</sup> Another idea was expressed in relation to the verse, Sura xxxix. 54, where it says, "God forgives sins, all of them." If all sins were forgiven then this must mean that there would be a term to all punishment. Some, however, said that this simply meant that believers would come out of Hell after a time.

Turning to the Christian views on the subject, we find that such men as Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia were reluctant to believe in the eternity of punishment.<sup>4</sup> When such were asked about the possibly persistent obduracy of men in resistance to God, they agreed that this would deprive men of the beatific vision, but they also held that the torment of Hell would cease for them and God would cease to chastise. The form which the resistance to the idea of eternal punishment took in the case of Origen and Gregory of Nyssa was a belief in final restoration. Origen considered that Ezekiel taught that Sodom would be restored.<sup>5</sup> He supports his theory of restoration philosophically. Evil is contrary to God's purpose and plan, and as such it is pure negation. Therefore it is impossible for it to be eternal. The eternity of Hell would mean the eternity of evil and that could not be. Gregory includes even Satan in the final restoration. He, too, felt that the cosmic process must lead to this. The time must come when God had put down all His enemies under His feet and when He has become all in all. Islam expresses the idea that God must be all in all by the passage "Everything perishes save His face",<sup>6</sup> but there is more the idea of an indestructible essence in this statement than a triumph for the Divine Grace. Nazzām seems to have had some idea of a cosmic renewal, since he is said to have believed that all creatures would enter heaven, "including beetles, fleas, dogs, swine, scorpions and snakes".<sup>7</sup> One of the difficulties which those Christians who

<sup>1</sup> Al Ash'arī : *Magālāt*, i. 149.

<sup>2</sup> 86 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Baghdādī : *Farg*, III. iii. Hierax of Leontopolis held the same view about the annihilation of children who died immature. See Epiphanius : *Haeres.*, lxvii and Augustine : *De Haeres.*, Cap. XLVII.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Mingana : *Synopsis*, Intro., p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Ezek., Cap. XVI.

<sup>6</sup> Sura lv. 27.

<sup>7</sup> Baghdādī : *Farg* (Nazzām's 20th heresy), Pt. III, Cap. III.

believed in final restoration had to face was, if this were true why did Christ come ?

One of the reasons why the idea of eternal punishment was uncongenial to Christian writers was the conviction that punishment must be remedial, and to prolong it beyond the point when it could be regarded as chastisement would make it vindictive. Nevertheless there is a sense in which the eternity of punishment was admitted by all, namely, the deprivation of the beatific vision was a possibility for those who remained obdurate. But the idea of purgation was much used. Origen seems to be the first to have done this with any force, and it is possible that his idea of a purifying fire may have been derived from Plato.<sup>1</sup> But Origen's doctrine must not be confused with Purgatory, because his purifying fire is before the resurrection. Islam rejects the idea of purgatory, but it has the substitute doctrine of the punishments of the grave (Sheol or Hades ?), and it also has the idea of a purgation in Hell. Some think all Muslims will go into Hell, but that then the quality of the Fire will be different from that for the unbelievers who suffer there. Origen also has this idea about the Fire, and he believed that all must be purified by it, "even Peter and Paul". Some Muslim heretics, e.g., Najda, held there was a possibility of a purgatory other than Hell-fire before men entered Paradise. Other Christian thinkers maintained the idea of purification but not in quite the same manner. They held that there was a progress of the soul through many degrees. This we find in Clement. Man rises through the seven heavens.<sup>2</sup> The ascent is until in the highest heaven the soul looks upon God with direct unclouded vision.<sup>3</sup> Some mystics of Islam seem to have conceived this ascent in a different way and they have thought that the ascent is completed when the soul has experienced the passing away (*fanā*) of the self and its survival (*baqā*) in God. This is something like absorption and the cessation of personal existence in a kind of Nirvana. Philo, Clement and Origen reject the idea of absorption in God and, holding the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul, do not believe in personal extinction. It is not always easy to understand the Neoplatonist view on the matter, but the approximation is obvious. "Soul Yonder is undifferentiated and undivided", says Plotinus.

Both in Islam and Christianity the doctrine of personal survival is strengthened by the belief in the resurrection of the body. This is true also of the Alexandrians even while their chief emphasis lay upon the immortality of the soul. Origen's belief is that souls go to two places after death. For this he gives scriptural proof, e.g., from the story of Dives and Lazarus. These places are under the earth. One

<sup>1</sup> *Phaedo*, 114, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Plato : *Timaeus*, 31, and *Vision of Hermas*, iii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Clement : *Stromat.*, vii. 3, 13.

is Hades, the prison of the imperfect, guarded by Cherubim lest those who dwell therein should approach the tree of life. These angelic guards appear again in the Qur'an (Suras xxxix. 73 and lxvii. 8). No one had passed the flaming swords of these Cherubim till Christ descended into Hades whence He brought forth the holy men who had passed away before His advent. Since Christ believers go straight to Paradise. In Paradise the souls have bodies. In Islam the souls rejoin their bodies at the second blast of the angel's trumpet. Sometimes it is maintained that a portion of the body, the rump bone, will survive and from it God will fashion another body. In Origen the bodily form in the intermediate state is something different from the reunion with their bodies which will take place on the day of Judgment. To say it is the same body does not imply that no change will have taken place in it at all. Here he follows St. Paul and insists on the glorious body, by which he means that its material substance will be changed in a way comparable with the changes which take place in our bodies while we live on earth, which is the same body and yet not the same. Origen was accused of teaching that the resurrection body would be spherical, according to what was considered by the Platonists to be the most perfect form for a body.<sup>1</sup> The charge was based on a passage in one of his works.<sup>2</sup> The bodily resurrection was a difficulty to some brought up in the Platonist tradition, as witness the reservation which Synesius made when he was appointed bishop. Contrary to the Muslim view, the general tendency in the Christians (though there are exceptions) is to regard the new body as sexless. Though the Mu'tazilites were influenced by Greek philosophy they seem to have accepted the bodily resurrection. The philosophers, however, were inclined more to believe in the immortality of the soul and to interpret the pleasures and pains of the hereafter as entirely spiritual and not sensual. In Ibn Miskawaih we see a compromise. This idea was not acceptable at all to the orthodox doctors of Islam. They said that this would mean that the soul would be punished for the body's deeds. We have already had an illustration of this from Baghdādi.<sup>3</sup> This statement is almost exactly the same as the protest of Tertullian. He argued that it would be "absurd, unworthy and unjust if the body were not raised up, because this would entail one substance doing the work and another reaping the reward".<sup>4</sup>

#### (v) THE VISION OF GOD

In Islam the doctrine of the vision of God is capable of division into two parts, the vision of God in this life and the vision of God hereafter.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Ibn Miskawaih, Bk. II, Cap. x (Vol. I, p. 149).

<sup>2</sup> *De Orat.*, 31.

<sup>3</sup> See also Muslim : *Imān*, 297–303.

<sup>4</sup> *De Anima*, Cap. LVI.

The reason for this is two sets of passages. On the one hand Moses is held by the orthodox to have had the vision of God in response to his request (Sura vii. 139).<sup>1</sup> Moses could not have asked God for an impossibility, for then he, a prophet, would have shown ignorance of divine things, which is absurd. By this the vision of God in the present life would be established. The other passage was Sura lxxv. 22, "Faces on that day shall be bright, gazing on their Lord." This would mean vision of God in the hereafter. Controversy raged about these matters, the Shi'ites and the Mu'tazilites denying that it was possible for God to be seen in this life, and supporting their denial by reference to Sura vi. 103, "Sight perceives Him not." Representative traditions on the subject are: from Suhayb, "The Prophet said, 'When the people who are destined for Paradise enter therein, God Most High will say unto them, "Do ye wish anything which I can add to you ?" They will say, "Hast Thou not whitened our faces, brought us into Paradise and saved us from the Fire ?'" Then the Prophet said, 'A veil will be raised and they will look on the face of God Most High ; and there will be nothing given them more pleasing to them than gazing upon their Lord.'"<sup>2</sup> Another from Ash Sha'bī b. 'Abbās: It is said that he met Ka'b at 'Arafa and asked him about certain matters. Then he cried "*Allāhu Akbar*", till the hills rang with the echo. Then Ibn 'Abbās said, "We belong to the *Bāhu Hāshim*." Ka'b replied, "Verily God Most High divided His vision and His conversation between Muhammad and Moses. He spoke to Moses twice and Muhammad saw him twice." "Then," said Ibn 'Abbās, "I went to Ayesha and said, 'Did Muhammad see His Lord ?' She answered, 'Thou hast said something which makes my hair stand on end.' I said, 'Be easy !' Then I recited the words, 'He certainly saw some of the greatest signs of his Lord.' She said, 'Wherever are the words carrying you ? It was only Gabriel. Whoever states that Muhammad saw his Lord, or concealed anything of what he was commanded, or knew the five things of which God Most High spoke, that with Him is knowledge of the Hour of the resurrection and that he sends down the rain and the rest, has told a great lie. But he saw Gabriel. He did not see him in his proper form more than twice, once near the tree *Sidrat ul Muntahā*, and once in Ajyād. He had six-hundred wings and filled the limits of the heavens.'"<sup>3</sup> There are traditions that Muhammad saw God,<sup>4</sup> and that he did not see him,<sup>5</sup> so authority can be claimed either way. The result is that some deny the vision of God in this world and some deny it altogether. A large number of the orthodox

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ephraim Syrus: *Homily on Our Lord* (Lamy I, cols. 209-221).

<sup>2</sup> *Mishkāt, Fitān*, on the Vision of God.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid., Fitān*, on the Vision of God, from Tirmidhi's collection.

<sup>4</sup> *Musnād*, Vol. I, 285, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Muslim: *Imān*, Tradd. 287-92.

Sunnis admit it both in the present world and in the next. Al Ash'ari<sup>1</sup> says that the Mu'tazilites agree unanimously in denying that Allah can be seen by ordinary sight. They differ, however, in respect to the question as to whether He may be seen with the heart. Some Mu'tazilites argue that seeing God means simply knowing God. They usually class the vision of God with anthropomorphism or *tajsim*, the ascription of a body to God. Abū Hudhayl said, "We see Allah with the heart. . . . It means we know Him with our hearts."<sup>2</sup> We can see in these points a conflict between literalism and rationalism, and it is possible that a mystical interpretation of the vision of God has also something to do with the denial of seeing God with the physical eye. Dirār b. 'Amr considered that God would be seen on the Last Day with a sixth sense.<sup>3</sup>

The vision of God in the mystical sense is very prominent in Philo. He, too, declared that the knowledge of the Most High is vision—but it is mystical vision, a direct intuitive communion, the perfection of contemplation, above the rational and an immediate apprehension. Philo spoke from his own experience.<sup>4</sup> He recalls it when he speaks of the divine intoxication of Hannah the mother of Samuel.<sup>5</sup> He relates how revelation came to him and his vision of the cherubim.<sup>6</sup> This is really prophetic vision and would be associated in Islam with the doctrine of *wahī* rather than with the doctrine of the vision of God. Contemplation rather than the naked eschatological vision of Islam is to be found in the *Mystical Theology* of Pseudo-Dionysius.<sup>7</sup> The Christian apologists considered that the vision of God was the very essence of immortality. The early theologians are prepared to consider the possibility of eternal life for all, but that would be a poor thing in itself because the height of bliss and rapture was the vision of God. This is the perfect consummation of contemplation. It is different in degree from mystic contemplation of God in the present life. Just as the latter is non-conceptual, so the former is beyond the crudeness of the merely material and sensible. Plotinus has an inkling of it: "You must close the eyes and call instead upon another vision which is to be awakened within you. This vision is the birthright of all, but few turn it to account."<sup>8</sup> This vision is accompanied by a passion of love.<sup>9</sup> It is not reason and it is hard to describe, "For how can one describe as other than oneself that which when one saw it seemed to be one with oneself?" Setting aside the idea of absorption into God,

<sup>1</sup> *Maqālat*, i. 150.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 157.

<sup>3</sup> *Kārg*, Pt. III, Cap. vi.

<sup>4</sup> *De Migrat. Abr.*, vii. (i. 441).

<sup>5</sup> *De Ebbriate*, 36 (i. 380).

<sup>6</sup> *De Cherub.*, ix. (i. 144); see also *De Vita Contemp.*, ii. 32 and *Somniis*, i. 40.

<sup>7</sup> Cap. I.

<sup>8</sup> *Enneads*, I, vi. 8; see also 9.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, vi. 7.

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the vision of God to the soul redeemed is the perfect union and love and delight in the will of God which will consummate the atoning love of Christ. Augustine presents the Christian conception in a most beautiful way. He introduces it by the repudiation of the carnal. "Now let us see what the saints shall do in their immortal and spiritual bodies, their flesh living now no more carnally but spiritually." That vision is the peace which passeth all understanding. Though saints in the resurrection may see it, it is not a physical seeing, for it is just the same if the eyes are closed. "We see now in a glass darkly, but then shall we see face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I am known." "Shall therefore the saints stand in need of corporeal eyes to see those things which are to be seen?" As Elisha saw Gehazi, so the saint shall see with his heart. "Nevertheless those corporeal eyes also shall have their office, and shall be in their place and the spirit shall use them by the spiritual body . . . although there is nothing to the contrary that the eye of the heart should be understood, concerning which eyes the apostle says: 'To have the eyes of your heart enlightened.' But no Christian man doubts that God shall be seen with them when He shall be seen, which faithfully receives that which God the Master says: 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.'" And concluding, "God therefore shall either so be seen by those eyes, because they have something in that excellency, like unto the understanding whereby the incorporeal nature may be seen, which is either hard or impossible to declare by any examples or testimonies of divine scriptures: or that which is more easily to be understood, God shall be so known, and conspicuous unto us, that He may be seen by the spirit of every one of us, in every one of us; may be seen of another in another, may be seen in himself, may be seen in the new heaven and the new earth, and in every creature, which shall be then: may be seen also by the bodies in every body, wheresoever the eyes of the spiritual body shall be directed by the sight coming thither. Also our thoughts shall be open and discovered one to another."<sup>1</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In bringing this survey of the theology of the period up to the end of the Christian ascendancy in the Near East to a conclusion, it is important to point out that so far as possible the illustrations have been confined to the period, and that they are only illustrations and examples from a wide field. No systematic criticism has been attempted, because this would have necessitated a departure from the limitations set. Here and there it has, however, been necessary to

<sup>1</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. XXII, Cap. xxix. See also *De Trinitate*, i. 17, 20, 21 and xii. 22,

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express particular judgments. It is hoped that in the third part of this study the whole field may be reviewed critically and with a constructive purpose. So far it must suffice that we have surveyed Muslim and Christian ideas in early juxtaposition and interplay during the formative period of Muslim doctrinal statement.

END OF PART ONE

## APPENDIX I

### THE TERMS USED IN CHRISTOLOGICAL AND TRINITARIAN STATEMENTS

Without casting the net too wide for such an appendix as this it is impossible to gather in all the material available and of interest to Eastern Christians who live in those lands where Arabic is spoken or where languages derived from or influenced by Arabic are used, e.g., Persian, Turkish, Urdu, etc. Wherever these languages are spoken it is common to speak of the Persons of the Holy Trinity by the word *agnūm* (sometimes *qunūm*), pl. *agānīm*, and in North India it is being debated at present whether such terms are used with propriety. It seems fitting therefore that an outline of the information should be made available to readers. For the immediate origin of *agnūm* we must look to the Syriac although a remoter and possibly more significant theological background has been suggested, as we shall see.

For the technical terms used in Syriac the appendix to Bethune-Baker's *Nestorius and His Teaching* is the fullest and most easily consulted.

The author of the appendix says that *qnūmā* "is the most difficult of the terms with which we have to deal and at the same time by far the most important theologically".<sup>1</sup> This is a view in which we most definitely concur. What follows must be taken in conjunction with his very illuminating account.

The predominant New Testament usage is to give reflexive meaning to pronominal suffixes joined to it.<sup>2</sup> It is highly probable that the primitive meaning of the word is "self".<sup>3</sup> The following instances are instructive : Ps. iii. 7 (*Hexaplar*) has the most general sense of "souls", i.e., persons (cf. similar use of *nephesh*). In Heb. i. 3 and xi. 1 (*Harklensis*) the word is used for substance or hypostasis. But Schaaf<sup>4</sup> points out that the chief use corresponds to *ipse* as, for instance, in Luke xi. 17; Rom. ix. 3; 1 Cor. ix. 27; Eph. ii. 15, etc. The most important instance of the use of the term is in a key passage, viz., John v. 26, which might be translated as it stands in the Syriac : "For as the Father hath life in *His own person*, even so gave He to the

<sup>1</sup> *Nestorius and his Teaching*, p. 220.

<sup>2</sup> Vide Nöldeke : *Kurzgefasste Syrische Grammatik*, Sect. 223, which gives the rules for the reflexive. Early examples of the use are to be found in *Didascalia* (ed. Legarde), 2, 1 (fourth century translation of Greek book of third century), "I myself". Cf. also *Ancient Syriac Documents* (ed. Cureton, 1864), p. 9, and Schaaf : *Lexicon Syriacum, concordantiale omnes Novi Testamenti Syriaci* (1717).

<sup>3</sup> Vide *infra*, p. 236.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit. ad loc.*

Son also to have life in *His person*." Tatian has this passage in the *Diatessaron* (xxii. 26) and the Arabic version has *binafsihī*, where *nafs* used in the construction of a reflexive is considered the equivalent. But in the edition by A.-S. Marmardji O.P. (Beyrouth, 1935, p. 214) we find that there is a version in the Vatican which has *biquñūmīhi* showing an Arabic transliteration of the Syriac. It is to be specially noted that the *Commentary of Ishodad of Merv*<sup>1</sup> on John v. 19-27 is evidence for the importance the Syrians attached to this passage for Trinitarian doctrine. It seems quite natural that if the text became the basis for a theological exposition of the relation of the Father to the Son, the use of *qnūmā* in the passage with its explicit distinction between the "persons" of the Father and the Son, would encourage its extended use as a technical theological term. The *Diatessaron* of Tatian was often used by the Syrian Church in preference to the canonical Gospels, and so, without making an unwarranted categorical affirmation, we may at least suggest the greatest probability that the origin of the technical use of *qnūmā* for "persona" lies in the passage John v. 26. It should be noted in passing that the Old Persian version uses the word *qunūm* in this passage.<sup>2</sup>

When we come to review the theological writers it is fairly clear that the earlier use of the term has practically nothing of the significance which attached to it after the Christological controversies. The predominant use in the earlier writers is still pronominal, or in the sense of "self"; or slightly extended to signify the separate entity of any thing or its reality, with here and there sufficient theological meaning, in the degree to which the Johannine passages are theological. The best authorities for this early usage are Aphraates (fl. 345) and Ephraim (d. A.D. 373) and possibly *Liber Graduum*, which is an anonymous work with so many excerpts from numerous writers that its date can hardly be fixed with any precision. The results of an examination of the use of *qnūmā* in these writers are as follows.

Aphraates has the reflexive use in a number of instances.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the word refers to Christ with no more Christological significance than

<sup>1</sup> In *Horae Semiticae* (ed. and trans. M. D. Gibson), Syriac text, Vol. v, p. 143 and translation, pp. 236 f. The expositions of some of the Fathers using this passage are also significant for its importance in Trinitarian teaching, cf. Tertullian: *adv. Prax.* 21 (ed. Migne, 1844, Vol. ii. col. 181); Cyril of Jerusalem: *Catechetical Lectures* (Jerusalem, 1867, Vol. i. 371), *Lect.* xi. 13; Eusebius: *Contra Marcellum* (ed. Gaisford), pp. 135 and 172. Theodore Mopsuestia: *Com. in Evangelium d. Johannis* (ed. Chabot), Syr. Text, Vol. i, p. 130 (has *qnūmā*). Hilary: *Trin.*, ii. 8, 10, 20; vii. 27; viii. 43; *De Synodis*, 13, 15, 18, 19.

<sup>2</sup> See *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta* (1657): "Āchunānki mar qidār rā zindagānī hast dar qnūm-i-sirīt-i-khū, īchunān befarzān nīz dād ki zindagānī dar qnūm-i-o bāshad", to be translated in its opening phrase, "For as it belongs to the Father alone to have life in the person of His own nature"—a very forceful construction. It is interesting that the Arabic version given in parallel has "fi dhātīhi" for the Father, and simply "fīhi" for the Son, i.e., "in His essence" and "in himself" respectively.

<sup>3</sup> *Patrologia Syriaca*, I, 185, 10, and II, 21, 12.

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when we say "Christ *himself*".<sup>1</sup> Homily 17 does not help us to any other view, though it is very important in another connexion.<sup>2</sup>

Ephraim provides us with overwhelming evidence of the general statement we have made above. In his long sermon *De Domino Nostra*<sup>3</sup> there is not one single occurrence of the word *qnūmā* with any Christological significance, although the word occurs a number of times in the following ways : "while laden with Thy blessings to deny Thyself";<sup>4</sup> "sustaining persecution in *His own person*";<sup>5</sup> "*ipse*" and "*seipsum*";<sup>6</sup> "How does Moses *himself* (or Moses' person) profit thee?";<sup>7</sup> concerning false gods ("*defectus torro eorum hi erant*").<sup>8</sup> When the subject is "Our Lord" and there is no technical use of *qnūmā* we might regard the evidence as conclusive. In the *Hymn to the Blessed Mary* the use of *qnūmā* has no special significance.<sup>9</sup> In the *Hymn on the Nativity of Christ* the word does not occur at all, but it does occur in the exposition which follows in a way which bears out our contention. This is an exposition based on the Johannine witness and *qnūmā* is used frequently in a devout echo of the scriptural use in John v. 26.<sup>10</sup> To clinch the matter, when the Holy Trinity is discussed there is no use of the term at all.<sup>11</sup> The instances above refer to Lamy's edition. In the Rome edition of 1737-43 there are instances of the use of the term in the sense of *res per se stans* or *substantia* : "In the beginning God created the *substance* of the heaven and the earth",<sup>12</sup> "something *substantial* or *real*";<sup>13</sup> "Death is not a *real* thing",<sup>14</sup> i.e., not a positive but a negative thing. Other references are given in the notes.<sup>15</sup>

The instances of the use of the word in *Liber Graduum* are more frequent. Many are purely reflexive,<sup>16</sup> and some refer to Christ<sup>17</sup> but the context makes it clear that the vast number of these cases

<sup>1</sup> *Patrologia Syriaca*, I, 161, 16.

<sup>2</sup> See also Aphraates' *Homilies* (ed. Wright), 121, 1 and 186, 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Sancti Ephraimi Syri, Hymni et Sermones*, ed. Lamy, Vol. i., 145-274.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 159.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 219.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, coll. 227, 233.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 245.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 163.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. ii, col. 615, cf. also ii, col. 571.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 511-513.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, col. 57.

<sup>12</sup> i. 6A.

<sup>13</sup> iii. 177E.

<sup>14</sup> iii. 249E.

<sup>15</sup> Assemani: *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, i. 68, gives a quotation from Barhebraeus of no particular importance for our purpose. In Overbeck's edit. *ad Hypatium*, 39, 20, we have reflexive use and in the same, p. 57, we have a number of adverbial occurrences in the sense of "really" or "independently" (*vide* Mitchell: *S. Ephraim's Prose Refutations*).

<sup>16</sup> *Liber Graduum* (ed. Kmosko, 1926), *Patrologia Syriaca*, III, 485, 668, 808, 809, 813, 816, 909.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 141, 380, 508, 557, 692, 732, 736.

refer to Christ manifesting or revealing in His person and the "hypostatic person" is not in evidence in accord with the later usage in controversy, so far as I have been able to ascertain.

But when we come to the later writers there is no lack of instances of technical usage. The fifth century provides a wealth of reference. It is used in the excerpts from the proceedings of the Second Synod of Ephesus.<sup>1</sup> We cannot be sure of the date of the translations of fragments of the great theologians who wrote in Greek, but we have Syriac versions of Theodore of Mopsuestia's words which contain the word *gnūmā* in the technical sense.<sup>2</sup> An extract about the Council of Chalcedon contains the word.<sup>3</sup> In Narsai (d. A.D. 502) we find "Three *gnūmē* has the Church learned from our Lord: Father, Son and Holy Ghost—one *īthūthā*".<sup>4</sup> Assemani gives an anathema of St. Isaac Magnus against those who say the nature of the Only Begotten is one and the person composite.<sup>5</sup> The references in Cyril of Alexandria (A.D. 412–444) are the fullest and cover practically the whole range of the use of "hypostasis" in the doctrine of the Person of Christ. *ēvnpoσtatos* (*bignūmā*)<sup>6</sup> and *āvnpoσtatos* (*lāgnūmā*)<sup>7</sup> and *āvnpoσtatoν πρoσwπoν*, *τò μὴ nφeσtwś*,<sup>8</sup> *āvnūparktos*,<sup>9</sup> and *μὴ nφeσtηkawś*,<sup>10</sup> all find translation by means of some construction containing "*gnūmā*".

When we come to the late writers it is quite natural that we should have a fully developed vocabulary making native to Syriac the distinctions originally expressed in Greek, but now matters of debate between Monophysite Jacobites, Nestorians and Melkites. Pseudo-Zachariah must date from the end of the sixth century and there we find a Monophysite citation of passages from the Fathers in support of the belief in one person (*gnūmā*) and one "nature" in Christ. In what purports to be a translation of a letter from Julian of Rome to Dionysius there is reference to the single person of Christ which is not divided into two.<sup>11</sup> In another place<sup>12</sup> Cyril is

<sup>1</sup> A.D. 449, *Excerpts* (ed. Perry, 1875), 290, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Lagarde: *Analecta Syriaca*, 105, 5; cf. Fritzsche: *Theod. Mop. de incarnatione filii Dei*, lib. xv., *fragmenta*, Turici, 1849.

<sup>3</sup> A.D. 456, an extract from John of Aegeae, *vide* Wright: *Cat. Syr. MSS. in British Museum* (1870–72), pp. 937b and 1007a.

<sup>4</sup> *Homilies et Carmina* (ed. Mingana). Connolly has a translation of some of these called *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*. See also Bethune-Baker, who quotes the above.

<sup>5</sup> Assemani: *Bib. Or.*, i. 219; see also 220.

<sup>6</sup> *De Incarnatione Unigeniti, dialogus in S. Cyrilli Archeepisc. Alex. Operibus*. Vol. vii. (ed. Ph. E. Pusey, 1877), 44, 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vii., 44, 6.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, vii., 42, 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, vii., 43, 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, vii., 45, 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Historia Ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo ascripta*, ed. E. W. Brooks, Vol. i. 192.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. i. 200.

represented as saying that in the unity of the same *qnūmā* Christ body is not separated.<sup>1</sup>

Before we pass on from this point it would be well to review the settled terminology. The authority for this is Mar Bābā'i<sup>2</sup> of Mount Izla (Babaeus Magnus) in his *Book of Union*. *Ousia* is often simply transliterated as *ūsiyā*, but may be *ūhūtā* as in Heb. i. 3 (Peshitta) or, when specially signifying "The Being" (*al wujūd*), *ūhyā*. When the being of others beside God is to be expressed *kyānā* or "nature" is used (cf. Arab. *kā'in* and *kā'ināt*) corresponding to the Greek *φύσις* particularly in Christological formulæ. *Parsōpā* is used for the Greek *prosopon* and *qnūmā* for *hypostasis*. Like *hypostasis*, *qnūmā* is very ambiguous. For instance, in the passage cited above (Heb. i. 3) in the version found in the *Bazaar of Heraclides*, Christ is called "the image of the *qnūmā* of the Father". The Nestorian use of *qnūmā* corresponds to the use the Cappadocian School made of *hypostasis*. They used *parsōpā* to denote the external appearance or manifestation (almost in a Sabellian manner, but without falling into that error). Maclean<sup>3</sup> says the Nestorians adopted the formula, "two *qnūmē*, one *parsopā* and two natures", adding that recent investigation shows *qnūmā* was used for "substance" not "person". He does not make it clear there what he means by the orthodoxy of saying there are two "substances" in Christ, but later in his article on Nestorianism<sup>4</sup> he says that by two "hypostases" are meant our Lord's two natures. This is a clear instance of the ambiguity of which we have spoken "The East Syrians take the word *hypostasis* in the sense of "substance," and so they talk of the *qnūmā* of the Godhead and the *qnūmā* of the manhood.<sup>5</sup>

Bābā'i says: " *Qnūmā* is individual essence or *ousia* existing in its particular being, numerically one and distinct from the rest, not as individualized, but in so far as in rational and free creatures it is potential to diverse accidents of virtue and vice, knowledge and ignorance; and in irrational creatures to the diversity of attributes resulting in opposite temperaments",<sup>6</sup> where the meaning seems to be almost

<sup>1</sup> This implies that the Monophysite author thought the confession of one *qnūma* by the Fathers he quotes as tantamount to confessing one *nature*. The unity of Christ's person seems to be the principle concern. But in quoting Gregory Thaumaturgus he represents him as saying that there are not two *qnūmē* and not two *kyānē*, which is mere tautology if *qnūmā* and *kyānā* are not differentiated. But see also *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, ii. 288, where we find the assertion that every nature is a *substantia* and *vice versa*.

<sup>2</sup> Nestorian (A.D. 569-828). All his book is important. The author gives definitions following the lead of Narsai (d. c. 502) and Barsauma of Nisibis (fl. fifth century A.D.). An edition was published in Paris, 1915, ed. A. Veschalde: *Liber de Unione*. The terms are also set out clearly in Assemani: *Bib. Orient.* (Rome, 1721), Vol. iii., ii., ccxxviii.

<sup>3</sup> *E.R.E.*, xii. 175.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 332.

<sup>5</sup> *Liber de Unione*, p. 159.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 160. It should be noted that there is a slight difference in pronunciation

"*subjectum*" or "*suppositum*" in its Scholastic connotation. Of *parsōpā* he says, "*Parsōpā* is that property by which a *qnūmā* is distinct from others, and by means of which two *qnūme* of the same *kyānā* (nature), for instance, Peter and Paul are distinct from one another". Thus *parsōpā* would be personal distinction. Primarily it means face, appearance or aspect, but it comes to mean "individual" (*shakhs*). Ostensibility is suggested by the Syriac idiomatic use of the word just as "*persona*" was used for the assumed role in drama. Bābā'i says (*loc. cit.*): "Since the special property which a *qnūmā* possesses is not the *qnūmā* itself, we call that distinguishing element '*parsōpā*'". The Nestorian Patriarch Timothy I (A.D. 778-820) understood *qnūmā* in the sense of *quidditas*.

Bethune-Baker says that Ephraim Syrus uses the word *qnūmā* to express what is indivisibly one in its existence and nature, whereas *kyānā* may be divided. In *qnūmā* there is not necessarily a personal significance in line with modern ideas of personality (neither is there in *persona*). In this there is a strong similarity to the word *shakhs*, which though it has come to be used for "person" in the modern sense, does not indicate primarily any personality at all, though in Urdu the commonest application will be to animate things. In the case of *qnūmā* we find it could be applied to inanimate things like the sun, though it is, of course, not certain that the person who used the term of the sun thought it to be inanimate. Belief that the heavenly bodies were animate was widespread.

When using the term *qnūmā* in regard to the person of our Lord, Jacobites take *qnūmā*, *parsōpā* and *kyānā* in the same sense. *Qnūmā* and *parsōpā* are species and genus in the same individual. Nestorians follow this usage. But when we come to the application of the term *qnūmā* to the Persons of the Holy Trinity we find no difference between Jacobites and Nestorians. The former say that the second *qnūmā* is born of the Father and the third *qnūmā* proceeds from the Father and takes from the Son while the latter say that the second *qnūmā* is born of the Father and the third proceeds from the Father. Neither says that the third or second is "*qnūmā* of the Father", although the Nestorians say that the Son is "the image of the *qnūmā* of the Father". They also say that their expression "one *parsōpā*" signifies "prosopic unity", i.e., personal unity, while the Jacobites, along with the statement that Christ is one *qnūmā* (not two as the Nestorians say), declare that there is one *kyānā* and one *parsōpā*, although the humanity and divinity of our Lord are distinct. East Syrians of Mesopotamia and Malabar and West Syrians from both between East and West Syrians. The former embrace both Catholics and Nestorians of the ancient Syrian Church. The latter include Catholics of Antioch and Malabar, Catholic Maronites and Jacobites. The East Syriac is represented in the transliteration chosen. The corresponding terms in West Syriac are *usiyō*, *parsūpō*, *kyōnō* and *qadēō*.

Syria and Malabar and the Maronites (Uniates) say that Christ is one *qnūmā*, two *kyānā* and one *parṣōpā*, identifying *qnūmā* and *parṣōpā* as the Catholics after Chalcedon identified *hypostasis* and *prosopon*.<sup>1</sup>

In Assemani<sup>2</sup> there is a statement attributing to the Nestorians belief in two substances (*ūsīyē*), two natures (*kyānē*), two persons or hypostases (*qnūmē*), one *prosopon* (*parṣōpā*), one image (*selmā*), one will (*sebīyānā*), one operation (*malbadhnūhā*), one power (*haylā*), and one *potestas* (*shūlītānā*). The attribution of two *ūsīyē* is peculiar. So much must suffice for a survey of the general usage.

The writings of the Jacobite Gregory Barhebraeus and the Nestorian Ebedjesus furnish us with still further illustrations of the established usage. They both date from the thirteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

The Arabic term *aqnūm* falls now to be considered. It is clear from what has been said that we must look to Syriac for the immediate origin of this Arabic term, for it is not pure Arabic. It is found in very early use. Al Ghazzālī uses it in his book refuting the divinity of Christ.<sup>4</sup> The Syro-Arabic Lexicons give the following meanings for the Syriac from which they transliterate *aqnūm*: “*shahs marī aw ghayr marī*”,<sup>5</sup> i.e., “person, visible or invisible” and “*nafṣī*”<sup>6</sup> (or *nafs*), i.e., “pertaining to soul”, or “self”. The *Kashshāf*<sup>7</sup> says. “*Al aqnūm pl. aqānīm*: I think it is *Rūmī* (Byzantine or European),

<sup>1</sup> Evidence for confusion between *qnūmā* and *parṣōpā*: *vide* Ebedjesu: *Margarita de Veritate Christianae Religionis*, pp. 317–334 (ed. A. Mai, 1838). Reference to *Maris, Amri et Slibae de Patriarchis Nestorianorum Commentaria*, ed. Gismondi, 1899, is also interesting (see *Maris*, text, pp. 38 f. and *Amri et Slibae*, text, p. 16). The last reference is interesting because it represents the *qnūmē* (Ar. *aqānīm*) as “attributes” of the Godhead, everlasting *sifāt*, a description which we shall have occasion to mention later and which appears in *Al Kashshāf*, the famous *Dictionary of Technical Terms*. We are also informed in *Amri et Slibae* that the followers of Nestorius used *qunūm* (early form of *aqnūm*) and the followers of Cyril (of Alexandria) used *jawhar*. In the same at p. 92 f. an event dated A.D. 962 is recorded when the questions of Qusta b. Lūqā in relation to whether there are two *qnūmē* in the Person of Christ are answered. The answers are as follows: Because Christ is the Word of God and has assumed humanity from our substance and since there are four possible categories, namely, generic substance, particular substance, accident adventing to substance and not subsisting *per se*, and one of the powers of substance, then if humanity (*nāsūt*) of Christ is an accident or one of the powers of substance, because these are all of them not subsisting *per se* and none of them is found except in substance, then the humanity of Christ cannot exist *per se*. And whatever is not subsisting *per se* is not an *aqnūm* and not a substance (*jawhar*). For if it is a generic substance, which is the species, then it does not exist sensibly . . . and so it must be particular substance (*al jawhar ul khāss*) and that is *al aqnūm ul qā'im bi-dhātihī*, e.g., Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. Qusta b. Lūqā professed himself satisfied.

<sup>2</sup> *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, iii., ii., coxxviii.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to *Bib. Or.*, i. 68 and ii. 276; *Chronicon* (ed. Bruns and Kirsch) 57; *Chronography of Barhebraeus* (Budge), 71, for the former's use of the word and *Bib. Or.*, iii. i. 259 for the latter's, and his argument that it did not imply tritheism. For others who speak of the three persons confessed in the Holy Trinity using this term, see *Bib. Or.*, i. 439, and *Bib. Apost. Vatican*, ii. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Ar Raddu'l Jamīḥu'l Silāhiyatī Isā bisarīhī'l Injīl*, 45, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Jesus bar Alii: *Syro-Arabic Lexicon* (*vide* Payne-Smith, *ad loc.*).

<sup>6</sup> Jesus Bar Bahulius: *Lexicon Syro-Arab. Bibl. Bodl.* (*vide* Payne-Smith).

<sup>7</sup> *Dictionary of Technical Terms* (ed. Sprenger), p. 1225.

*Al aqānīm* according to the Christians are three of the attributes of God and they are Knowledge, Existence and Life. They express Existence (Being) by the Father, Life by the Holy Spirit (*Ruh ul Quds*), and Knowledge by the Word (*kalima*), and they say that the *aqnum* of the Word is united with Jesus, on Whom be peace, as in at *Tafsīr ul Kabīr* ". The word *aqnum* is sometimes vocalized *qunūm* and sometimes appears as *qunūm*. The definition in the *Kashshāf* is supported by the celebrated dictionary *Ghiyāth ul Lughāt*.

One cannot help thinking that in many cases apart from the reflexive use, which would naturally be translated by some construction with *nafs* or possibly *dhat*, the Syrian word *qnumā* often seems to lend itself to an Arabic translation by the word *ma'nā* pl. *ma'anī*.

With this in mind let us look again at a long passage from Ephraim's Hymn on the Faith.<sup>1</sup> "Thou hast heard of God that He is Father; by His Fatherhood know His Begotten. . . . Thou hast heard of the Brightness of the Son; do not thou insult Him by thy questionings. Thou hast heard His Name; praise (Him) by His Name; to pry into His Name is not permitted. Thou hast heard of Father, Son and Spirit. By the Names hold the realities. . . . If thou confessest their names and not their *qnumē*, thou art, etc. . . . Where there is nothing in subsistency (*qnumā*) the name which intervenes is empty (has no content)", i.e., there is nothing solid about it. Without doubt this is a most important passage and the Appendix to Bethune-Baker gives it in full and adds other similar illustrations. In the succeeding hymn he notes that along with the word *qnumā* as representing the substance of the thing named, the word *shrārā* (truth) is used many times, almost as a synonym. We would draw the attention, therefore, of those who are interested in the Arabic explanation of this term to the fact that you have here something which corresponds to many a passage in Arabic religious literature where *ma'nā*, *ma'anī*, *haqq* and *haqiq* are the accepted expressions. "By the names hold what is signified by the names,"<sup>2</sup> i.e. the *ma'nā* (Urdu : *ma'nē*). Supporting this we might point to the fact that the Syro-Arabic dictionaries in addition to the meanings of *qnumā* given above also give : "something capable of being pointed out". Let it be noted also that there is the same difficulty in the translation of *ma'nā* as in the case of *qnumā* and probably for the same reason. The commonest translation for the word in India would be "meaning", but often the translation "nature" is required—not nature in the sense of *tabi'a*, but in the sense of the reality of a thing or its entity. Considering this parallel, it seems to me that Ephraim was using the term *qnumā* in the sense of "what is signified or pointed out". This would resist any Sabellian modalism, and would point to

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Morris : *Select Works of S. Ephrem the Syrian*, 1847, 398. See also pp. 380 and 382.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Ta'iyyat* of Ibn Fārid, lines 540–548.

*qnūmā* in its original meanings as a better word than *prosopon*, and would lead to the further inference that *wajh*, which would be a possible translation of the Greek *prosopon*, is a less satisfactory word for users of Arabic and the kindred languages than *aqnūm*, because *wajh* might easily degenerate into mere "aspect" or "appearance" without any underlying meaning or *ma'nā*.

Before, however, coming to the final summing up another point should be considered because it may have some theological significance. In his Arabic Dictionary the Rev. J. G. Hava, S.J., gives the derivation of the word *agnūm* in his appendix of foreign words employed in Arabic as from the Greek *γνώμη*. It may be that this is one of the words for the etymology of which the compiler will not vouch, as he says in his foreword. I have found hardly any evidence to support this derivation, but it has been suggested to me that *γνώμη* was used instead of *prosopon* in so far as the latter would mean an outward appearance, manifestation or embodiment of God. It is worthy of note that in the ten or more times when Ignatius of Antioch uses this term (once saying quite categorically that Christ is "γνώμη of the Father")<sup>1</sup> he does so in the sense of "showing one's mind" or "manifestation". This would suggest "appearance" which is hardly the case with *qnūmā* especially when what we have said about Ephraim's use is considered. In fact "*parsōpā*" would be far more appropriate to the meaning of aspect or appearance and is so used.<sup>2</sup> But even if in some sense we could refer to the Son and (still more remotely possible) Spirit as *gnomai* of the Father, we should still be as far off from the use of such terms as "three *gnomai* in the Godhead", which is an expression remote, uncouth and unacceptable.

The instances of the use of the actual word *γνώμη* in the early ecclesiastical writers with anything but the very ordinary meanings of "opinion", "counsel", "statement" or "saying" are hard to come by. In Athanasius,<sup>3</sup> quoting Dionysius, there is a phrase "who are specially opposed to the *γνώμη* of Sabellius". In Robinson's translation of this<sup>4</sup> the word is translated "opinion" with good reason and giving a good sense to the passage, but it is always possible that the word here is used in a technical sense and that "the Sabellian *γνώμη*" has far more significance than we have attached to it.<sup>5</sup> It is also worth remarking that the description of the *qnūme* or *aqnām* as attributes (*sifāt*) in *Al Kashshāf* and *Amri et Sibae*, already noted, may savour of modalism. But in the case of *qnūmā* little danger of

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Biblioth. Or.*, i. 234 (Isaac Magnus).

<sup>3</sup> Athanasius : *De Decretis Syn. Nic.*, 26.

<sup>4</sup> *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*.

<sup>5</sup> Another instance of a peculiar use of *γνώμη* is to be found in Wendland : *Hippolytus Werke* : Vol. 2, p. 138. But *γνώμη* is such a common word that it is difficult to distinguish when it has a special meaning and when not.

modalism seems to attach to the use of the word and the real danger which is actually recorded is that believing in three *qnūmē* might lead to tritheism. It is true that if *qnūmā* means "self" (cf. *nafs*) and "self of the Father" is applied to Christ then there is a danger of a blunting of distinctions and of doing less than justice to the humanity of Christ, but when from such a conception we pass to the triune statement there is not the same danger at all. We have seen that there is some suggestion of modalism in the way Ignatius is interpreted when he uses *γνώμη* and a further suggestion has been made that if we look for the sources of the use of the word we must examine the African Schools and particularly the naïve theology of Cyprian and Lactantius or what Harnack calls *Geistchristologie* as distinct from *Logoschristologie*. In Cyprian<sup>1</sup> we have an instance which might be put alongside the quotation from Ignatius where Gen. xxxv. 1 is used to prove Christ to be God, and it is implied that Christ is God who has appeared. The difficulty is that here we have Latin texts to examine, and they cannot afford any help in the search for a particular Greek word. The most we might do would be to point to the use of such phrases as "*in consilio Patri suo*"<sup>2</sup> where *consilio* might represent the Greek, or if Christ is thought of as the "counsel" of God or His "will"—an idea not infrequently met with—another meaning of *γνώμη* as "purpose" or "will" would be represented.<sup>3</sup> In Nestorius there is an instance of the use of *γνώμη* where there is a statement that the unity of the two natures in Christ is not according to substance (*ousia*) but *γνώμη*.<sup>4</sup>

Another possible line of research lies in the use of the word *γνώμη* by Stoic Monodynamists and Platonist Bidynamists for the *λόγος προφορικός* as distinct from the *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος* in the third or fourth centuries, or for applied reason as distinct from the immanent Intellect. Epictetus<sup>5</sup> speaks of man having *λόγος* and *γνώμη* in common with the gods. Here the latter word is used in the sense of "intelligence" or "mind". There are some who think that when Ignatius used the words "*γνώμη* of the Father" he meant "mind" or "thought" of the Father,<sup>6</sup> though it is quite possible that we must consider the use of the term as meaning nothing more than that Christ is our means of knowing the Father.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately the Syriac version of Ignatius

<sup>1</sup> *Book of Testimonies*, ii. 6, "illi Deo, qui tibi apparuit."

<sup>2</sup> *Hermas*: *Simil.*, ix. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Tatian uses the idea of Christ as God's will, see Dorner: *The Person of Christ*, Div. I., Vol. I., p. 281, and Hippolytus describes Christ as the will of the Father in *Contra. Noet.* 13, but when such ideas are expressed in the Greek the words are *θέλημα* and *βούλησις* but not *γνώμη* so far as I have discovered.

<sup>4</sup> Loofs: *Nestoriana*, p. 224, for *εἰδοκίᾳ* possibly, but not for *qnūmā*.

<sup>5</sup> *Dissertations*, i. 3, 3. *Vide* Ritter and Preller: *Historia Philosophiae Graeca*, p. 476. For his use of the term see also Stuhmann: *De vocabulio notionum philosophicarum ab Epicteto adhibitis*, and Findlay: *Expositor's Greek Test.* on 1 Cor. i. 10, "γνώμη is the application of *νοῦς* in practical judgement".

<sup>6</sup> "pense du Père" Edouard Brunton. The Latin gives "Patri sententia".

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Irenaeus: *Haer.*, iv. 5, 1; 6, 4, and Aristides quoted *E.R.E.*, vii. 260.

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does not contain the passage where this phrase occurs in the Greek. It is, however, certain that the term must have been used in relation to some such idea of the revealing function or office of Christ. Stephanus<sup>1</sup> gives “mens” and “animus” as meanings of the Greek, and here again we might see some connexion with identifications of Christ with the revealing Spirit.<sup>2</sup> Aphraates can afford us an example of this type of thought.<sup>3</sup> “Adam was conceived and dwelt in the thought of God . . . and after that God brought forth Adam from within His thought, He fashioned him and breathed into him of His spirit. . . . It is nothing strange, therefore, that we call Christ the Son of God. For God conceived all men and brought them forth from His thoughts. And they will be forced to own that the name of ‘God-head’ belongs also to Christ”, etc. Distinctions are blurred. But there is no suggestion of the use of *qnūmā* here. There is an interesting use of *qnūmā* for *anima* in Theophilus of Antioch.<sup>4</sup> Certain passages in Lactantius and Tertullian are interesting also, with their reference to Zeno and “*animum Jovis*”<sup>5</sup> in a context which says, “God begat a pure and incorruptible Spirit, Whom He called Son”, “This Son of God is the Speech (and even ‘rationem’) of God”, and “It is the Spirit of God which is named the (rational) soul (*animum*) of Jupiter”. In the absence of clearer evidence these must be but interesting speculations, for all the evidence points to *qnūmā* as being in the early records used as “self” and in the developed theological vocabulary used as “*persona*” or “*hypostasis*”, and to be used almost invariably to translate *hypostasis*<sup>6</sup> and never, so far as I have yet discovered, to translate *ψυχήν*. Where a parallel text is available this can be put to the test.<sup>7</sup> Any exception which the foregoing review may have suggested is opposed by a mass of evidence for the main rule. This does not, however, rule out the possibility of *qnūmā* having been affected by such ideas as we have described above during its history. The

<sup>1</sup> *Thesaurus Graeca Linguae*, Vol. vii., col. 11015.

<sup>2</sup> Pseudo-Cyprian: *De Montibus Sina et Sion*, c. 15, “*Christus vocatus est spiritus sanctus qui de caelo descendit*”, cf. also Hermas: *Simil.* v. 6. On the Syriac side see *Liber Graduum*, coll. 793 f. Other references: Lactantius: *Instit.*, 4, 6 and 4, 8 (in *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, xix.), see notes on p. 286.

<sup>3</sup> Gwynn’s trans. of Homily 17 (pp. 387–392).

<sup>4</sup> *Adv. Marcionem* (art. by Loofs in *Texte und Untersuchungen* (1930), 46.

<sup>5</sup> Lect. *Instit.*, 4, 6–9 and Tert. *Apol.* (ed. Migne, 1844), Vol. i., coll. 398 f. Did such ideas call forth Clement’s protest (*Strom.*, v. 1), “The word of the Father is not that *prophorikos*”?

<sup>6</sup> Examples: Sachau: *Theod. Mopsuesteni fragmenta Syriaca*, 47 (from *De Incarnatione*), *parōpā* is used throughout though reflexive *qnūma* seems justified sometimes (e.g., 55); *Bib. Or.*, ii. 288 and iii. i. 121 (Latin, p. 123), iii., ii., cxxviii f, where a careful consideration of the terms contains no suggestion of *ψυχήν*. (Note here among the Arabic terms *farsuf* for *prosopon*.) Assemani: *Bib. Apost. Vat.*, iii. 372. Dominican Dictionary (*Dicit. de la Langue Chaldienne*, Audo, Mosul, 1897) gives no reference to *ψυχήν*.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Texte und Untersuchungen* 48 *Die Syrischen Clementinen mit Griechischem Paralleltext*, see pp. 8–9 and 164–165.

word *qnūmā* is most probably a native Semitic word though its derivation is obscure. The *nūn* may be a servile letter or an intrusion such as Levy<sup>1</sup> illustrates. It may be that the root is *qnm* for which support might be found in Jastrow.<sup>2</sup> Lidzbarski<sup>3</sup> says *qnm* appears in the Canaanitish inscriptions with the meaning "self". Schultheiss<sup>4</sup> thinks the root is *qwm*, and it is certain that if not in the beginning, it comes to have in the course of its history a significance similar to that of words with the root *qwm*.<sup>5</sup>

The interest to which we referred lies in the following implications : that the Arabic word *aqnūm* comes to be used after Christological controversy has influenced the meaning of its progenitor considerably ; that the latter's use may have been associated with a simpler theology and biblical language with little theorizing, a theology which was less concerned with the explication of the intrinsic being of the Godhead, and more with the dispensational or economic view of the revealing and redeeming activity of God ; and, further, that a reconciliation of the two points of view represented seems to be a *sine qua non* in presenting Christological and Trinitarian doctrine to the Muslim, as will appear in a later part of this work. It should also be noted that in the brief sketch above what appears as "co-counsel" in one School might be equivalent to the "circumcession" in another School which we have discussed in the body of this volume. One must be content at this stage to throw out these fragmentary suggestions. It should also be remarked that nothing has been adduced of any consequence as to the use of *γνώμη* for "person" of the Holy Trinity, unless we point to the remote possibility that in the fragment of Nestorius to which we have previously referred, seeing that Nestorius so greatly emphasized "prosopic" or personal union between the two natures of Christ, *γνώμη* might stand for that. But as the use Nestorius makes of terms is notoriously loose nothing much can be inferred from a strange use of *γνώμη* by him.

Finally, as to the propriety of using the term *aqnūm* in the language areas Arabic or influenced by Arabic, whatever the history of this word may have been it comes to the Christians of the middle and Near East and North India with *only one application*, i.e., for the Person of Christ or for the Persons of the Holy Trinity. It is also the term upon which at long last there is some unanimity of opinion among the Syrian Christians. The substitution of any other term might easily open up new causes of controversy, because of a former Islamic use of

<sup>1</sup> *Chaldaisches Wörterbuch*, ii. 369.

<sup>2</sup> *Dict. of Targumim*, ii. 1363a, 1393a "to establish or make firm". Cf. *qwm* in Hebrew and Arabic.

<sup>3</sup> *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, i. 363.

<sup>4</sup> *Lexicon Syro-Palestinianum* (Berlin, 1903), p. 181b.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., *qayyim* and *qā'im*, self-subsistent and subsisting; *qā'im bidhātihi*, *per se* *stans* or *subsistens*.

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them. I refer to terms like *wajh* for *prosopon*, where there would be real danger of reducing the Persons of the Holy Trinity to "aspects", or *shuyūn* (*shu'ūn*), *ma'nā* and *ma'ānī* or *haqā'iq*, all of which I have heard suggested, and which have often a history in Sufi thought, if not in orthodox thought, which would imperil the Christian doctrine. So let us remember that this word is primarily a Scriptural word, which cannot be said even for *persona*, appropriate to the differentiation between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and valuable to preserve the personal in the self-revelatory acts of God, and to do justice to the reality of the Incarnation. And further let us remember that no term can be chosen which is absolutely outside the field of controversy.

## APPENDIX 2

## VERSES ABROGATED IN THE QUR'AN

Sura ii. 59 is cancelled by iii. 79, ii. 77 by ix. 5, ii. 103 by ix. 29, ii. 109 by ii. 139, ii. 133 by ix. 5, ii. 153 by ii. 124, ii. 154 by ii. 155, ii. 168a by ii. 168b, ii. 173 by xvii. 35, ii. 176 by iv. 12, ii. 179 by ii. 183, ii. 180 by ii. 181, ii. 186 by ix. 36, ii. 187 by ix. 5, ii. 188 by ix. 5, ii. 192a by ii. 192b, ii. 211 by ix. 60, ii. 214 by ix. 5, 216a (wines and games of chance) by xvi. 69, ii. 216b by iv. 46, v. 92 and 93, ii. 216c-217 by ix. 104, ii. 220 by v. 7, ii. 228 by ii. 229-30 (twice and thrice), ii. 228 by ii. 229 ("unless both fear they cannot keep within the bounds, etc."), ii. 233a by ii. 233 ("if they choose to wean by consent"), ii. 241 "year" by ii. 234 "four months and ten days", ii. 257 by ix. 5, ii. 282 "Have witnesses, for selling" by ii. 283 "But if one of you trust", ii. 284 by ii. 286, ii. 286 by ii. 181. In Sura iii, verse 19 is cancelled by ix. 5, 27 by ix. 5, 80-82 by iii. 87, 91a by iii. 91b "for those able", 97 by lxiv. 16, 107 by ix. 29, 139 by xvii. 19, 183 by ix. 28. In Sura iv, verses 8-9 are cancelled by iv. 12, 11 by iv. 5-6, 10 by ii. 178, 19a by 19 "or God shall make some way for them", 20 by xxiv. 2, 21 by iv. 22, 23a by iv. 23b "unless they have been guilty of undoubted lewdness", 26 by the same "though what is past may be allowed", 27 by the same "except where it is already done", 28 by xxiii. 65 (cf. Jalalain vol. ii. 155), 37 by viii. 76, 50 by ii. 212-213, 33 by iv. 60, 66 by ix. 5, 67 by iv. 81 and lxiii. 6, 73 by ix. 123, 82, 83, 92 and 93 by ix. 5, 94 by ix. 1, 95 by iv. 116 and 51 and xxv. 70 and 68, 144 by iv. 145 and 86 and 90 by ix. 5. In Sura v, verse 2 is abrogated by ix. 5, 16 by ix. 29, 37 by v. 38, 46 by v. 54, 99 by ix. 5, 104 by v. 104 "when ye have the guidance", 105 by lxv. 2, 106 by lxv. 2, 107 by lxv. 2. In Sura vi, verse 16 is abrogated by xlvi. 2, 66 by ix. 5, 67-68 by iv. 139, 69 by ix. 29, 91, 104, 106, 107, 108, 112 by ix. 5, 121 by v. 7, 135-6, 138, 159 and 160 by ix. 5. In Sura vii, 179, 198, and 182 are all cancelled by ix. 5, the "Sword Verse". In Sura viii, 1 is cancelled by viii. 42, 33 by viii. 34, 39 by viii. 40 and ii. 189, 63 by ix. 29, 66 by viii. 67, 73a by viii. 74 and 73b-74 by ix. 5. In Sura ix, verses 1 and 2 are cancelled by ix. 5 (all), ix. 5 is abrogated by itself in the words "But if they shall turn, let them go their way", ix. 7 by ix. 5, 34 by ix. 60, 39-41 by ix. 123, 44 by xxix. 62, 81 by lxiii. 6, 98-9 by ix. 100. In Sura x, verse 16 is cancelled by xlvi. 2 and verses 99, 102, 108, 21, 42, 47, 109 by ix. 5. Sura xi. 15 is cancelled by ix. 5 verse 18 by xvii. 19, and verse 122 by ix. 5. In Sura xiii, 8 is cancelled by iv. 51, and 116 and 40 by ix. 5. Sura xiv. 37 is abrogated by xvi. 18. In Sura xv, 3, 85, 88, 89, 94 are

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all cancelled by ix. 5. In Sura xvi, 69 is cancelled by v. 92–93, 84 by ix. 5, 108a by xvi. 108 b “ If ye were forced ”, 126 and 128 by ix. 5. In Sura xvii, 24–25 are cancelled by ix. 114, 56 by ix. 5 and 110 by vii. 204. Sura xviii, 18 is abrogated by lxxvi. 30. In Sura xix, 40, 76 and 87 are abrogated by ix. 5 and verse 60 by xix. 61 and verse 72 by xix. 73. In Sura xx, 113 is cancelled by lxxxvii. 6–7 and verses 130 and 135 by ix. 5. In Sura xxi, 98 and 100 are abrogated by the following verses : 101, 102 and 103. Of Sura xxii, verses 48, 55 and 67 are abrogated by ix. 5, 51 by lxxxvii. 6, and 77 by lxiv. 16. Sura xxiii. 56 and 98 are cancelled by the Sword Verse (ix. 5). In Sura xxiv, 4 is cancelled by xxiv. 5, 3 by xxiv. 32, 6 by xxiv. 24 “ the testimony of each shall be a testimony four times repeated ”, and xxiv. 7 and 9 “ the fifth time ”, 17 by xxiv. 29, 31 by xxiv. 59, 53 by ix. 5 and 57 by xxiv. 58. Sura xxv. 68–69 are abrogated by xxv. 70, xxv. 64 by ix. 5, xxvi. 224, 225, 226 by xxvi. 227–228, xxvii. 94–5 by ix. 5, xxviii. 55 by ix. 5, xxix. 45 by ix. 29, xxix. 49 by ix. 5, xxx. 60 by ix. 5, xxxi. 22 by ix. 5, xxxii. 30 by ix. 5, xxxiii. 47 by ix. 5, xxxiii. 52 by xxxiii. 49. Suras xxxiv. 24, xxxv. 21, xxxvi. 76, xxxvii. 174–5, xxxviii. 70 and 88 are all abrogated by the “ Sword Verse ” ix. 5. In Sura xxxix, 4 is abrogated by ix. 5, 15 by xlvi. 2, and 16–17, 37, 40, 41, 42, 47 by ix. 5. Sura xl. 12, 57 and 77 are abrogated by ix. 5, xli. 34 by ix. 5, xlii. 3 by xl. 7, xlii. 4 and 14a by ix. 5, xlvi. 14b “ For this cause summon thou them to the faith . . . to Him shall we return ” by ix. 29, xlvi. 19 by xvii. 19, xlvi. 22 by xxxiv. 46, xlvi. 37 by xlvi. 41, xlvi. 47 by ix. 5, xlvi. 83 and 89 by ix. 5, xlvi. 59 and xlvi. 13 by ix. 5, xlvi. 8 by xlvi. 1–6, xlvi. 34 by ix. 5, xlvi. 5 by ix. 5 “ cancelling both free dismissals and ransomings ”, xlvi. 38–39 by xlvi. 40, l. 38 and 44–46 by ix. 5, li. 19 by ix. 60, li. 54 by li. 55, lli. 31, 45 and 48 by ix. 5, llii. 30 by ix. 5, llii. 40 by lli. 21, liv. 6 by ix. 5, lvi. 13 and 14 by lvi. 38–39, lvii. 13 by lvii. 14, lx. 8 by lx. 9, lx. 10 by itself “ Let them not go back to the unbelievers ”, and lx. 11 by ix. 5. Suras lxviii. 44 and 48 are cancelled by ix. 5, lxx. 42 and 5 by ix. 5, lxxiii. 1–2a by lxxiii. 2b, 3 and 4, lxxiii. 5 by iv. 32, lxxiii. 10 and 11 by ix. 5, lxxiii. 10 by lxxvi. 30, lxxiv. 11 by ix. 5, lxxv. 16 by lxxxvii. 6, lxxvi. 8, 24 and 29 by ix. 5, lxxx. 12 by lxxxii. 29, lxxxii. 28 by lxxxii. 29, lxxxvi. 17 by ix. 5, lxxxviii. 21, 22, 23 by ix. 5, xcvi. 8 by ix. 5, ciii. 2 by ciii. 3, cix. 6 by ix. 5. The foregoing is a complete list, and on examination it will be seen the number of abrogated verses is more than 260, the Sword Verse is said to abrogate no less than 119 verses itself, and its first clause is said to be abrogated by its second clause.

### APPENDIX 3

#### ANALYSIS OF THE VOCABULARY OF THE QUR'AN AS IT RELATES TO THE SUBJECT OF THE DIVINE WILL AND PURPOSE

The two terms which are of primary significance for the understanding of the Quranic doctrine of predestination are *Qadar* and *Qadā*. The verb *qaddara* (inf. *tagdīr*) means : He acted with care and premeditation, or he exercised thought in planning something. When the word is used with God as the subject it may signify design in the accomplishment of something, or that He preordained, decreed, predestinated or predetermined something. The following passages of the Qur'an illustrate this. "Who has no partner in His kingdom and created everything and then *decreed it determinately*" (Sura xxv. 2), "Of what did He create him ? Of a clot. He created Him and *fated him*" (Sura lxxx. 19), "The *decree* of the mighty, the wise" (of day and night, sun and moon, Sura vi. 96), "God's bidding (*amr*) is a *decreed decree* (*gadaran maqdūran*, Sura xxxiii. 38), "Did we not create you from contemptible water and place it in a sure depository unto a certain *decreed term* ?" (Sura lxxvii. 22).

It is sometimes used almost in the sense of "creating" or for "providential care", e.g., in Sura xli. 9 and x. 5. In modern language the derived noun *qudra* is often used for the world of "nature" and the natural, always, however, with the idea in the background that "nature" and the "natural" are the power of God. This usage is illustrated in the following passages : "Celebrated be the name of thy Lord Most High who created and fashioned and who *decreed and guided*" (Sura lxxxvii. 2 and 3), "Verily everything have we created by *decree* and our bidding is but one (word) like the twinkling of an eye" (Sura liv. 49).<sup>1</sup>

The derived epithets *al Qādir*, *al Qadīr* and *al Muqtadir* applied to God signify the divine power. Passages containing this name or some verbal use expressing the same idea are : "God is *able* to send down a sign" . . . "He is *able* to send down torment on you from above you and from beneath your feet and to confuse you in sects and to make some of you taste the violence of others" (Sura vi. 37-38 and 65), "Could they not see that God who created the heavens and the earth is *able* to create the like of them and to set for them an appointed time ?" (Sura xvii. 101), "Is not He that created the heavens and the

<sup>1</sup> Further references are : Suras lxv. 7 ; xv. 21 ; xxiii. 18 ; xlvi. 26 ; xvii. 32 ; xxviii. 82 ; xxix. 62 ; xxx. 36 ; xxxiv. 35 ; xxxiv. 38 ; xxxix. 53, and xlvi. 10.

earth *able* to create the like thereof ? Yea, He is the knowing creator ; His bidding is only, when He desires anything, to say to it, ' Be ' and it is. Then celebrated be the praises of Him in whose hands is the kingdom of everything ! and unto Him shall ye return " (Sura xxxvi. 81). " Did they not see that God, who created the heavens and the earth and was not wearied with creating them, is *able* to quicken the dead ? Nay, verily, He is Mighty (*Qādir*) over all " (Sura xlvi. 32), " If God willed he could go off with their hearing and their sight (of unbelievers). Verily God is *Mighty* over all " (Sura ii. 19), " Whatever verse we may annul or cause thee to forget, we will bring a better one than it, or one like it ; dost thou not know that God is Mighty over all ? " (Sura ii. 100, which implies that God has power to revoke His own word), " Wherever ye are God will bring you together " (at the last day), " Verily, God is Mighty over all " (Sura ii. 143), " He forgives whom He will and punishes whom He will for God is mighty over all " (Sura ii. 284),<sup>1</sup> " Say, O God, Lord of the Kingdom, Thou givest the kingdom to whomsoever Thou pleasest, and strippest the kingdom from whomsoever Thou pleasest, and abasest whom Thou pleasest ; in Thy hand is good. Verily Thou art Mighty over all " (Sura iii. 25), " Ye cannot hurt Him at all for God is Mighty over all " (Sura ix. 39), " God it is who created the seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof. The bidding descends between them, that ye may know that God is mighty over all " (Sura lxv. 12), " But God, nothing can ever make Him helpless in the heavens and the earth ; verily He is knowing, *powerful* " (Sura xxxv. 43), " The warning came to Pharaoh's people ; they called our signs lies, and we seized on them with the grasp of a mighty, *powerful* one " (*muqtadir*, Sura liv. 42).<sup>2</sup>

Instances of the use of the word signifying the possession of power and referring to man or to creatures are singularly rare, and such instances as occur are most instructive. Thus in Suras xvi. 77 ; ii. 266 ; xiv. 21, and lvii. 29, " power " is denied to men, and in Sura lxviii. 25, it is used of those who have arrogantly presumed to go their own way and have not had the grace to " make the exception ", i.e., to say " God willing ". In one case the term is used of the measuring out of the wine by the dwellers of Paradise, perhaps a hint at casting off restraint and acquiring a new freedom (Sura lxxvi. 16).

The second important term is *Qadā*. The primary meaning of this term is the complete finishing of something by word or by deed.<sup>3</sup> " The Lord hath decisively commanded " (Sura xvii. 24) referring to word, and " He decreed them seven heavens " referring to an act of God

<sup>1</sup> Also in Sura iii. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Other references are Sura xi. 4 ; xlvi. 21 ; xviii. 43 ; xlvi. 41 ; lxxv. 4 ; lxxv. 35 ; lxxxvi. 8 ; ii. 103 ; iii. 186 ; v. 20, 22 ; xvi. 79 ; xxii. 6 and 40 ; xxiv. 44 ; xxix. 19 ; xxx. 49 ; xxx. 53 ; xli. 39 ; xlii. 7 and 28 ; lvii. 2 ; lix. 6 ; lx. 7 ; lxiv. 1 ; lxvi. 8 ; lxvii. 1 ; iv. 132 and 148 ; xxv. 56 ; xxxiii. 27 ; liv. 55 ; xxiii. 18 and 97 ; lxx. 40.

<sup>3</sup> See Lane's *Lexicon ad loc.*, and Baidāwī on Sura ii. 111.

(Sura xli. 11). In addition it expresses, when applied to God the idea that He wished something and so necessitated its being (Sura ii. 111). The primary notion is therefore to decree, to ordain, to pronounce decisively and to decide judicially. A derived meaning applied to man is when it is used of "performance" of the ritual worship, or of "satisfaction" or "making up" for a neglected duty in the ritual prayer, etc., as in Suras ii. 196 and iv. 101. Beside the passages noted the following should be mentioned : "He it is who quickens and kills, and when He decrees a matter, then He only says to it 'Be' and it is" (Sura xl. 70),<sup>1</sup> "What can they expect but that God should come unto them in the shadow of a cloud and the angels too ? But the thing is decreed" (Sura ii. 206), "Every nation has its Messengers ; and when their Messenger comes to them, it is decided between them with Justice and they are not wronged" (Sura x. 48),<sup>2</sup> "The matter was decided" (of the Flood in Sura xi. 46), "The matter would have been decided" (if God had sent down an angel, Sura vi. 8), "We gave Moses the book before, and then they disagreed concerning it, and, had it not been for a word (*kalima*) that had been passed by thy Lord, it would have been decided between them" (which would appear to mean that there was no settling of the disagreement because of a previous decision by God (Sura xi. 112), and similarly in Sura xlvi. 13. "But they did not part into sects until after the knowledge had come to them, through mutual envy ; and had it not been for thy Lord's word already passed for an appointed time, *it would have been decided* between them, but verily, those who have been given the Book as an inheritance after them are in hesitating doubt concerning it." That this is foreordination is shown by Sura xvii. 4, "And we decreed to the Children of Israel in the Book : 'Ye shall verily do evil in the earth twice, and ye shall rise to a great height.' " and also in the following : "And when we decreed for him (Solomon) death, naught guided them to his death save a reptile of the earth which ate his staff" (Sura xxxiv. 13), "It is a decided matter" (the Angel to Mary at the Annunciation of the birth of Christ in Sura xix. 21), "There is not one of you who will not go down into it (Hell) ; that is settled and decided by thy Lord" (Sura xix. 72), "It was that God might accomplish a thing that was as good as done" (of the Muslims' victory over Mecca in Sura viii. 43). Another interesting passage is Sura xx. 113, "Hasten not the Qur'an before its inspiration is decided for thee ; but say O Lord increase me in knowledge", in which there is more than a hint of progression in divine decision.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Similarly Sura iii. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly in Suras x. 55 ; xxxix. 69 ; xxxix. 75, and xxvii. 80.

<sup>3</sup> Other passages for reference are Suras iv. 68 ; xv. 66 ; xlvi. 79 ; xi. 21 ; x. 93 (of decision on the Last Day) ; xxvii. 80 ; xix. 36 ; xxviii. 14 ; xxxix. 43 ; x. 20 ; xiv. 26 ; xix. 40 ; xl. 78 ; xli. 45 ; xlvi. 20 ; xlvi. 28 ; lxii. 10 ; xxviii. 44 ; xx. 75 ; lxxx. 23 ; vi. 60 ; xxxv. 33.

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Beside these words it is instructive to examine the Quranic use of the verb *sha'a'a*—he wills. The following passages should be specially studied. “And had we sent down to them the angels, or the dead had spoken to them, or we had gathered everything to them in hosts, they would not have believed, *unless God had willed*” (Sura vi. 111), “God cancels what He wills, or He confirms” (of abrogation Sura xiii. 39), “Verily thou canst not guide whom thou dost like (*HBB*) but God guides whom He wills (*SHA'*) ; for He knows best who are to be guided” (Sura xxviii. 56). This is a significant passage, because when the parallel human agent is spoken of, the root used is *HBB* and when God is the subject *SHA'* is used, a contrast between human caprice and the prerogative of Allah ! Sura xxviii. 68 is another interesting passage because in this there is a parallel between *HBB* and *SHA'*—both with God as the agent, “For thy Lord creates what he likes and chooses ; they have not the choice. Celebrated be the praise of God ! and exalted be He above what they associate with Him !” It will be seen that choice is denied to any other but God. Other passages are : “But had God pleased they would not have associated aught with Him” (Sura vi. 107), where it is clearly implied that polytheism is by the will of God. “And as for those who are wretched, why, in the fire ! There shall they groan and sob ! to dwell therein for aye, so long as the Heaven and the Earth endure ; save what thy Lord will. Verily, thy Lord is one who works His will” (Sura xi. 109).

In one passage man's willing and God's willing are brought into emphatic contact and contrast, viz., Sura lxxxvi. 28, “It is but a reminder to the worlds to whomsoever of you chooses to go straight ; but ye will not choose, except God the Lord of the World should please”. There are actually more than one hundred and sixty references with God as the subject,<sup>1</sup> and with man as the subject about twenty-five in all. It is most instructive to examine these cases where man is said to will or choose. Firstly, there is a number of passages which apply to exalted personages, e.g., Muhammad, *Khidr*, and Adam and Eve. These are Suras xxxiii. 51; xviii. 76; xxiv. 62; ii. 33, and vii. 18. Secondly, there are instances of the use of the word by people in arro-

<sup>1</sup> A complete list of the instances with God as the subject is : Suras xvii. 32; xviii. 23; xxii. 19; ii. 84, 99, 136, 208, 209, 248, 252, 263, 272, 274, 284; iii. 4, 11, 32, 35, 66, 67, 124, 174; iv. 51, 52, 116; v. 20, 21, 44, 59, 69; vi. 80, 88, 111 f.; vii. 87, 125; ix. 15, 27; x. 26, 107; xii. 56, 76, 101; xiii. 14, 26, 27, 30, 39; xiv. 4, 13, 32; xvi. 2; xxiv. 21, 35, 38, 43, 44, 45; xxviii. 56, 68, 82; xxxix. 20, 62; xxx. 4, 36, 47, 53; xxxiv. 12, 35, 38; xxxv. 1, 9, 21; xxxvi. 47; xxxix. 6, 24, 53; xl. 15; xlvi. 6, 10, 12, 18, 26, 28, 48, 49, 51, 52; xlvi. 60; xlvi. 5, 32; xlvi. 14, 25, 27; lii. 27; lvi. 65, 69; lvii. 21, 29; lix. 6; lxii. 4; lxxiv. 34, 55; lxxvi. 28, 30, 31; lxxx. 22; lxxxi. 29; lxxxii. 8; lxxxvii. 7; ii. 19, 65, 219, 254, 256; iv. 92; v. 53; iii. 25, 26; vi. 35, 41, 107, 112, 128, 135, 149, 150; vii. 154, 175, 188, 198; ix. 28; x. 17, 50, 99; xi. 35, 109, 110, 120; xii. 56, 76, 100, 110; xvi. 9, 37, 95; xvii. 88; xviii. 37, 68; xxi. 9; xxii. 5; xxiii. 24; xxv. 11, 47, 53; xxvi. 3; xxvii. 89; xxviii. 27; xxix. 13; xxxiii. 24; xxxvi. 66, 67; xxxvii. 102; xxxix. 68; xxxiv. 9; xxxvi. 43; xli. 13; xlvi. 19; xvii. 19.

gant speech, thus arrogating to themselves that to which they have no right, a sort of usurpation of the Divine prerogative. These are : "They say, 'These cattle and tilth are inviolable. None shall taste thereof, save such as we please '" (Sura vi. 139), "When our verses were rehearsed to them they said, 'We have already heard. If we pleased we could speak like this ; verily this is nothing but tales of those of yore '" (Sura viii. 31), "They said 'O Shu'ayb ! Do thy prayers bid thee that we should forsake what our fathers served, or that we should not do as we please with our wealth ?'" (Sura xi. 89). There are a few instances where the verb is used with the people of Paradise as the subject, presumably because they are in an exalted state and are freed from obligation. Typical passages are : "Therein shall they have what they please " (Sura xvi. 33), "They shall say, 'Praise be to God who hath made good His promise to us and hath given us the earth to inherit ! We establish ourselves in Paradise wherever we please '" (Sura xxxix. 74).<sup>1</sup> An ambiguous text is Sura xviii. 28, "The truth is from your Lord, so let him who will, believe ; and let him who will, disbelieve." This, as translated, would mean that man has the power to believe or not to believe, but the orthodox commentator ('Abbās) says that this verse refers to the decree. He reads it therefore as "He whom God wills to believe certainly will do so, and whom He wills to be an infidel will be one." This takes the Arabic word *man* as objective and God as the subject of the verb (cf. also vii. 154). Otherwise this would be a most important exception to the general rule in the Qur'an. Outside the illustrations given there are exceptionally few instances where will is ascribed to man in general in the Qur'an. These are Suras xxv. 59 ; ii. 55, 223 ; vii. 16<sup>1</sup> ; xxxix. 17 ; xli. 40 ; lxxiii. 19 ; lxxvi. 29 ; lxxviii. 39, and lxxx. 12. Most of these are permissive and the only ones which would imply freedom of will to man in any real sense are in Suras xli. 40, lxxiii. 19, and lxxvi. 29, "Whoso will let him take unto his Lord a way." It may therefore be said that "willing" is considered to be an action of God and that this action is sparingly ascribed to men.

The next group of passages which should be examined is that which refers to God's permission. The term which is used for this is *Idhn*. God's permission is associated with the revelation of His truth, with the disagreement about the former revelation, with the invitation to pardon, with the miracles of Saul and Jesus, with the idea of intercession, victory against odds, the ill which befalls man, the production of the fruits of the earth. Belief is by permission of God and also death. The Prophet's authority is by His permission. Paradise is also by the permission of God. The sky does not fall except by His permission. It is by His permission that the Jinn work for Solomon, that people vie with one another in good works, that angels and spirits

<sup>1</sup> Other passages in this connexion are Suras xxv. 17 ; xxxix. 35 ; xlii. 20 ; i. 34.

descend, that anyone speaks on the Last Day. It should be noted that when Pharaoh is spoken of as exercising an authority arrogated to himself, he speaks of himself as giving permission. Just as in the former case it was seen that men arrogate to themselves the power to will.

Typical texts are : Sura ii. 209, "God guided those who did believe to that truth concerning which they disagreed by His permission." Sura iii. 139, "It is not for any soul to die save by God's permission written down for an appointed time." Sura x. 3, "There is no intercessor except by His permission." Sura x. 100, "It is not for any person to believe save by the permission of God." Sura xxii. 64, "He holds back the sky from falling on the earth except by His permission." Sura lix. 5, "What palm trees ye did cut down or what ye left standing upon their roots was by God's permission, and to disgrace the workers of abomination."<sup>1</sup>

The cases where the idea is used with man as the agent in giving permission are very few. Thus Joseph's eldest brother asks permission of his father in Sura xii. 80. In Sura vii. 120 we have the arrogant Pharaoh speaking, and his words are repeated in Suras xx. 74 and xxvi. 48. Pharaoh said, "Do ye believe in Him ere I give you leave?" The only other reference in this class is Sura iv. 29.

Another group of terms signifying purpose, wish, desire, seeking after, intention, are derived from the root *RWD*. The various derivatives of this root are used commonly with God or man as the subject. General references are given in the footnote.<sup>2</sup> The dominance of the intentions of God is brought out very vividly in the following : Suras xxxvi. 82, "His bidding is only when He desires anything, to say to it 'Be' and it is." Sura xxxix. 6, "Had God wished to take Himself a child, He would have chosen what He pleased from what He creates." Sura xxxix. 39, "If God wished me harm, could they remove His harm ?" Sura xlvi. 11, "Who can control for you aught from God, if He wish you harm or wish you advantage ?" Sura ix. 46, "Had they wished to go forth, they would have prepared for it a preparation, but God was averse from their starting off and made them halt, and they were told to sit with those that sit." In this passage man's wishes are controlled by God. Sura xvii. 19, "Whoso is desirous of this life that hastens away, we will hasten on for him what we please

<sup>1</sup> The complete references for God's permission are as follows : Suras ii. 91, 209, 221, 250, 252, 256 ; iii. 43, 145, 139, 160 ; iv. 67 ; v. 18, 110 ; vii. 56 ; viii. 67 ; x. 3, 60, 100 ; xi. 107 ; xiii. 38 ; xiv. 1, 14, 28, 30 ; xx. 108 ; xxii. 64 ; xxiv. 36 ; xxxiv. 11, 22 ; xxxiii. 45 ; xxxv. 29 ; xl. 78 ; xlii. 51 ; lviii. 11 ; lxi. 5 ; lxiv. 11 ; lxxviii. 38 ; xviii. 4 ; xxxi. 40 ; xlii. 20 ; liii. 27.

<sup>2</sup> With man as the subject : Suras ii. 228 ; iii. 146 ; iv. 63, 133 ; vii. 107 ; xi. 18 ; xii. 25 ; xvii. 105 ; xviii. 76, 80, 81 ; xxi. 70 ; xxii. 22 ; xxiii. 24 ; xxv. 63 ; xxvi. 34 ; xxviii. 18 ; xxxiii. 20, 49 ; xxxiv. 42 ; xxxv. 11 ; xlvi. 19 ; lxxiv. 52, and lxxxv. 5. With God as the subject (beside the other illustrations given) Suras ii. 24, 181, 254 ; ix. 86 ; xxii. 14 ; xi. 33 ; lxxiv. 33, and viii. 68.

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(*SHA'*) for whom we please (*RWD*) ; then we will make hell for him to broil in, despised and outcast." Sura iv. 90, "Do ye wish to guide those whom God hath led astray ? Whoso God hath led astray, ye shall not surely find for him a path." (The vanity of human wishes, even for man's good, when the divine thwarts them !) Sura v. 1, "O ye believers ! Fulfil your compacts ; lawful for you are brute beasts, save what is here recited to you, and allowing you the chase while you are on the pilgrimage. Verily, God ordaineth what He will." Sura xi. 109, "Verily Thy Lord is One who does what He wishes." Sura xxii. 16, "God guides whom He wishes." Sura lxxxv. 16, "The Lord of the Glorious Throne, the Doer of what He wishes."

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